CBW
Coach and Bus Week
The PSV industry's news weekly • 5 April 1997 • Issue 263

PROTEST IN VAIN

Shearings preferred bidder despite WA staff protest

UP AND RUNNING

Skills Brighton depot gets into gear

Sweet HARMONY

Operator, Bova - and driver - in tune

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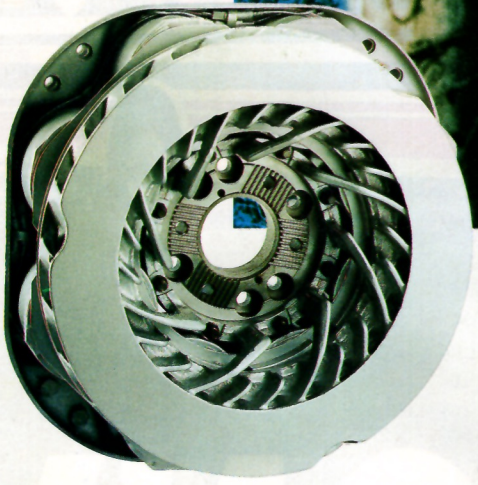
RETARDERS



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CBW Coach and Bus Week

Coaches get raw deal in York 2000

THE environmental transport lobby group Transport 2000 has, unsurprisingly, announced that banning cars from the High Street can build retail trade.

"Shoppers respond to their environment," says Lynn Sloman, Transport 2000's spokeswoman. "All the evidence shows that the best way to revive town centres is to restrain traffic and provide clean air free from exhaust fumes, as well as on-street facilities like benches, cafes and open spaces."

The report highlights changes in York, where Park and Ride, pedestrianisation and crawl-speed traffic calming have increased 'footfall' by double in 10 years, and increased shop spend. So York surely shines as an example of public transport in perfect harmony with people's needs?

Not quite. Coach operators have not forgotten that, in August, they are faced with an example of the most blatant discrimination... a situation where public transport is **banned** from visiting York. The Police have decided that, on the basis that a couple of coachloads of drunken young racegoers have created public order offences within the city in years gone by, the simplest cure is to route every coach passenger, law-abiding or otherwise, directly to the racecourse and away from it at the end.

Some operators may think this is 'fair enough' but most do not. It is an infringement of operators' freedom of trade, depriving them of profitable add-ons, and restricts the public's right of access to the city centre, though it must be said that car drivers face no such sanctions. It is extremely doubtful whether the traffic order which allows this to happen would stand a full legal test, either in Britain or Europe, and the Confederation of Passenger Transport's region should not let the issue drop.

■ JUST in case you think nothing worse than seatbelts can clobber the industry, well, think again.

The latest bright idea to come out of Europe is a proposal to ban the use of PSVs first licensed more than 10 years previously from undertaking an international journey.

For us, even in the south of England, an international journey involves crossing water. Local bus services that cross boundaries in mainland Europe are international journeys.

If this proposal gets the green light, before we know where we are we will face a 10-year life limit for any PSV.

Mike Morgan, Editor

REACHING THE PARTS OTHER COMPANIES CANNOT REACH

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events

9 April: Remaking The Countryside, Royal Town Planning Institute, Northern branch meeting at Northumberland County Hall. Details on 0191 222 7812

10 April: Buses Worldwide meeting, Fred Tallant Hall, 153 Drummond Street, London NW1, 7pm. Details from Ian Johnston, 3 Cypress Drive, Fleet, Hants GU13 9HE

14/15 April: Smart Cards in Transport, Implementation and Development Conference, The Selfridge Hotel, London. Details on 0181 743 8787, fax 0181 740 1717

17/18 April: 21st Nottingham Conference and Exhibition - Influencing the Transport Decisions. University of Nottingham. Speakers include Neil Kinnock. Details, fax 01223 881604

19-20 April: UK Coach Rally, Brighton. Details from Ann or Paul Cousins of Coach Displays Ltd on 0181 581 0049. Trade inquiries contact Mark Griffin on 01926 888123

21 April: Bus Priority and Improvements to Local Bus Services. One-day conference at Napier University, Edinburgh. Speakers on Quality Partnerships, Guided Bus, Route Length Bus Priority, Park and Ride etc. Details from Tom Rye on 0131 455 2210/2477

22-24 April: Traffex 1997 Conference — Challenges for the Millennium, National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham. Details from Lisette Westerhuis on 0181 741 1516, fax 0181 741 5993

25 April: Omnibus Society meeting, LT HQ, 55 Broadway, London SW1. Thomas Knowles, Lancaster Buses. Details from Barry Le Jeune on 0171 918 3295

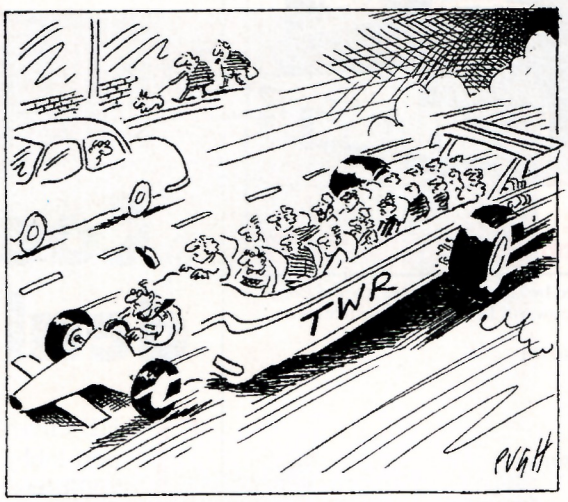
10-11 May: Greater Manchester Museum of Transport reunion of Stockport Corporation transport department workers and old buses. Contact Steve Lord at the museum on 0121 722 4649

13-15 May: Association of Local Bus Company Managers (ALBUM) conference, De Vere Hotel, Blackpool. Details from Ian Marsh at Blackpool Transport on 01253 348247

24-25 May: AEC Society 14th Annual Road Run and Rally, Wollaton Park, Nottingham. Details on 01509 212672

▼ Coach and Bus

Volvo's race to future



VOLVO'S new generation of coach and bus chassis may be developed by racing car specialists from TWR, in a new joint venture.

TWR, which owns Damon Hill's Arrows team, has taken a 65 per cent stake in a small coach and bus development project which will take a lateral view of chassis and components manufacture to improve quality and reduce cost.

TWR has considerable involvement in small-run car manufacture from its experience in motor racing cars, and is moving into volume production with its major stake in AutoNova - a plant at Volvo's Uddevalla site which will produce 20,000 of Volvo's C70 coupe.

The new coach and bus design team will consist initially of 10 people, with share capital of four million Kroner (£0.33 million) but is expected to grow to 50 people within a few years. The md will be Lennart Nodby, former aftermarket manager for Volvo cars in Sweden.

▼ Coach

CC chief's op in liquidation

WEIRS Tours has been placed in voluntary liquidation by its sole director, Dennis Noble - chairman of the Confederation of Passenger Transport's Coach Commission.

The company was, according to Mr Noble, the victim of the loss of significant MoD contracts, and was placed into liquidation to protect Mr Noble's other company, Mallard Weirs Tourlink, which is still operating.

"My wife and I are among the worst-hit creditors," said Mr Noble, who had invested heavily in Weirs Tours. "There are always difficulties in running businesses."

Company profit and loss sheets show Weirs Tours to have traded at a loss of £45,664 in 1994, and £15,876 in 1995. Auditors noted in March last year that: "The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. This basis may not be appropriate, as the company is dependent upon the support of its bankers and major creditors to continue trading." The report noted that overdraft arrangements had been restructured during the previous year.

The company was put into liquidation on 11 March by Mr Noble, and liquidator Peter Nicholl, of Dallas Nicholl in Paisley, appointed. A spokesman for Dallas Nicholl said details would be made available once they'd been circulated to creditors.

Livery reflects KCRC's fleet of Hong Kong trains

▼ Bus

Deckers off

THE first of eight 11.3-metre Olympians with Northern Counties bodywork are on their way to Kowloon Canton Railway Corporation, in Hong Kong. The tri-axles join other UK-built buses, including three Darts and 15 B10Ms, all with Paladine coachwork by Northern Counties. They have Nippondenso air conditioning and 120 Lazzerini seats.

▼ Coach

Shear now i

Stock Exchange

SHEARINGS' interest in Wallace Arnold Tours became official last week after a Stock Exchange announcement from the Barr and Wallace Arnold Trust that the company is in the course of negotiations to sell its Leisure division, and that Shearings' holding company Leisureplus is the preferred bidder.

This followed a two-hour BWAT board meeting which drew vociferous protests from around 100 of the workforce, fearful of their future employment prospects.

Initial fears that the WA tour operation might be swallowed up by its Lancashire rival were also dispelled by the announcement, which said that the Shearings' holding company Leisureplus intended that Wallace Arnold and

What pr

A MANAGEMENT buyout would not be without its pitfalls, as already experienced by management buyouts in the bus industry, where banks and venture capitalists eventually force the company to sell out to make their returns.

Wallace Arnold's leisure division does not make the sort of returns that could sustain banks and venture capitalists for any period of time.

Its 1995 results produced an operating profit of only five per cent and a profit margin before tax of less that four per cent. This alone would be insufficient to satisfy interests on debts, let alone provide cash for investment and

ings and Wallace Arnold — t's official

announcement confirms sale talks

by Andrew Jarosz

Shearings would become separate branded operations.

Given the strength of brand loyalty in the Yorkshire area, it is inevitable that Shearings would want to concentrate on the strongest brand and, if anything, the Shearings operations in Yorkshire might suffer from integration.

The only substantive change which might occur would be if the current depot and headquarters at Gelderd Road in Leeds were not offered for sale, as seems to be the case, and operations had to move elsewhere such as the Shearings' interchange at Normanton.

Nevertheless, current chauvinism over the Leeds-based company, overlooks the fact that, less than 20 years ago, WA was a true Yorkshire operator with depots at Scarborough, Bradford, Castleford, Royston and Pudsey as well as Leeds, and a move to Normanton, for instance, would not be out of keeping with the company's historical heritage.

Nevertheless, the current ambiguity over the situation has raised calls from the workforce that management should be allowed to buy the firm in preference to a sale to its larger rival.

Spokesman Gordon Durrans, WA's marketing manager, said that the wording of the statement was ambiguous and it was always likely that Shearings would keep the WA brand, even if they got rid of existing operations.

"Keeping the Wallace Arnold brand and investing in Wallace Arnold are two completely different things. The statement does not say what of the current operation would be retained and what investment would be put behind the Wallace Arnold brand," he said. "This raises more questions than it answers, and does nothing to satisfy the concerns of the workforce."

Neither Shearings, nor WA bosses were available for comment as all have signed confidentiality undertakings, but it is now understood the BWAT board approached Shearings with a proposition to sell.

■ **Shearings targets regional rivals, page 12**

WA SHEARINGS Demonstrator injured as protest over future of 500 travel jobs flares up

TAKEOVER FURY

KEEP WALLACE ARNOLD IN LEEDS

FOR WORKERS NOT BANKERS

WA workforce's protests captured the local newspaper headlines

ice for Management Employee Buy Out?

dividends. Painful reconstruction could be demanded by financiers and job cuts would become inevitable.

Shearings Group Ltd, which was capitalised at around £60 million, was itself purchased by employees at the end of last year in a £100 million deal, which allowed the staff a margin of over £20 million for working capital and expansion plans. It stated at the time its object was to grow and float on the stock market within 18 months.

This in itself would guarantee the company's independence from key financiers and allow employees to reap a fair dividend on their investment.

Shearings employees are currently buying equity share blocks in their company, and stand to make a healthy profit when the company is floated. It is not inconceivable that an enlarged company, which included WA, would offer WA staff the opportunity of share ownership and eventual capital gain.

Thus the current euphoria of staying independent clouds the real issue that BWAT has put the operation up for sale. Staff have clearly not been given an opportunity to evaluate the pros and cons of a merger with Shearings but it is clear that Shearings is a long-term player in the leisure industry. CBW

● ● ● inside TRANSIT this week ● ● ● inside TRANSIT this week ● ● ● inside TRANSIT this week

NEWS

FirstBus is reorganising, with new divisions and new regional directors responsible for groups of operations. Find out who is responsible for what in Britain's biggest bus-operating group. The Public Accounts Committee has published its findings on a detailed look at rail privatisation including the now controversial award of the South West Trains franchise to Stagecoach. The committee was particularly concerned over the cost of the Office of Passenger Rail Franchising's financial and legal advisers - who were appointed by OPRAF without the benefit of competition or competitive tendering.

As South West Trains returns to normal MTL is learning that operating trains puts companies into the spotlight far more than operating buses ever did and in the run-up to the election there are numerous pressure groups and interested parties watching every move, ready to jump on the operator whenever anything goes wrong or any new policy brings change.

National Express and Sea Containers are doing well out of their trains with contributions to profits and increasing passenger levels showing just how rail privatisation is working in some areas.

Stagecoach is showing its muscles in Manchester with some new products and 24-hour bus services.

The MMC has reported on the Cowie takeover of British Bus and, despite reservations from London Transport, some operators and the Surrey County Council, it has accepted that the takeover is not against the public interest .

ANALYSIS

Cowie can move ahead now the spectre of the MMC and the threat of divestment has been lifted. Bus operations are doing well for the Group. Full P&L and balance sheet analysis this week.

PLUS

All the latest job and tender classified ads.

The New Railway and the bus industry are now moving forward in an ever more political environment. In the run-up to an election it is increasingly important to keep up to date with changes and trends. Fill out the subscription form on the inside back cover to ensure you know what *Transit* knows this week.

In brief

Under threat

OLD established passenger transport companies are under threat from new entrants to the industry, says the latest *Plimsoll Portfolio Analysis - Passenger Transport* from Plimsoll Publishing Limited. The publication allows for rapid comparisons to be made between companies. Details on 01642 230977.

Driver of year

SEVENTY two drivers from Seaham-based Durham Travel have taken part in a driver of the year competition over two weeks at the Beamish Open Air Museum, County Durham. The top 10 drivers were taken to a lunch at Lumely Castle. Eddy Benson from Wearside came first and won £100 worth of shopping vouchers.

Deal cleared

THE proposed acquisition of CentreWest by FirstBus has been cleared by the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry in accordance with the recommendation of the Director General of Fair Trading not to refer the takeover to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

Age identifier

VEHICLE registration numbers should retain an age-based identifier which should be changed every six months when the present sequence of prefix letters expires in the year 2000, says the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders and two motor trade associations.

Easy learning

CHILDREN with learning difficulties can now learn road safety in the security of the school playground using a simulated traffic management system installed by Siemens at Ferney Field School in Oldham.

▼ Bus

GMBN and GMPTA quality partnership

Bus stops access upgraded for low-floors

by Andrew Jarosz

FIRSTBUS subsidiary GM Buses North and Greater Manchester PTA have launched their first quality partnership on the 600/601 services from Wigan to Leigh — the last part of an overall "easy access" initiative introduced by the PTA nearly two years ago.

Five low-floor Volvo B10Ls with wheelchair ramps have been introduced on the services, and offer a basic half-hourly frequency on the 600/601, which gives eight buses per hour from Wigan to Ashton in Makerfield, and four buses per hour on the entire route length. Evening and Sunday frequencies drop to half hourly, with low- floor buses providing an hourly frequency. Conventional vehicles operate other departures on the two routes.

The PTA launched its initiative before the availability of low-floor buses had developed widely and offered financial grants towards the purchase of low-floor buses to a number of bus operators throughout its area to upgrade specific routes.

The GMN/PTA package involves the PTA and Highways Authority for the district examining every bus stop en route and upgrading access to help docking for the low- floor buses.

GMN managing director Alan Westwell said the buses were the latest stage in the company's strategy to improve its quality of product to the customer.

"These vehicles complement those launched on our Wigan "Orbital" service last year and represent our commitment to ensuring customer satisfaction."

Five low-floor Volvo B10Ls offer half-hourly frequency on 600/601

▼ Bus

Cowie's takeover gets OK

COWIE Group's £282 million takeover of British Bus Group's operations last August has been cleared after a full Monopolies and Mergers Commission inquiry, with the Government accepting its findings.

John Taylor, minister for corporate and consumer affairs, said that, although there are some consequences of the merger which the MMC could foresee adversely affecting the public interest, they were not satisfied on the evidence that such adverse effects are probable, as opposed to merely possible.

The acquisition, which brought companies in Central Scotland, North Wales, Central England as well as London into the Cowie portfolio, makes the group second in size to FirstBus.

The MMC found that, on a national level, the merger would be as likely to generate competition, as to lessen it. In London, it felt that London Transport Buses, as regulator, has considerable discretion to influence the competitive make-up of the London market.

"In respect of London, the MMC found that there is an important element of regulation with bus routes being subject to periodic competitive tender," said Taylor.

▼ Coach and Bus

New finance package from Lombard

LOMBARD Business Finance has launched a new finance package which defers payment of part of vehicle purchase cost until the end of a lease agreement.

Triple Choice fixes the repayments and the final, lump-sum payment at the beginning of the contract. The lump sum is set at a level to reflect the resale value of the coach or bus, and the operator decides, at the end of the agreement, which option to exercise.

The choice is to keep the vehicle and pay the deferred lump sum, sell the vehicle privately to repay the lump sum, and keep any surplus, or simply return the vehicle to Lombard, who will repay the lump sum themselves.

"It's ideal for purchasing high-value assets such as commercial vehicles," said Lombard marketing director Paul Gee.

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Green fuel guides: three of Guide Friday's 10-strong Edinburgh fleet are converted to LPG

▼ Bus

Guide Friday's LPG Atlanteans 'first'

SCOTLAND'S first 'green' fuel buses are the first in a nationwide roll-out of LPG vehicles being co-funded by the Energy Saving Trust Powershift project (*CBW*, 29 March).

Three of Guide Friday's 10-strong Edinburgh fleet of open-topped buses have so far been converted with more to follow. In addition it already has three converted buses in Stratford and will shortly announce a similar move in York, bringing the total LPG buses to 13 out of the company's 100-vehicle fleet.

The LPG buses are Leyland Atlanteans with 680 engines converted by Guide Friday over the last three years. They use Calor Gas Autoblend.

● Calor Gas is to donate £100 to the British Lung Foundation for each vehicle conversion over the next 12 months.

▼ Coach

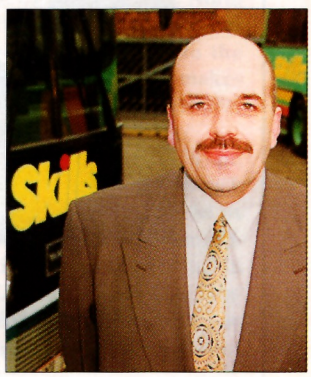
Hove

Former Wallace Arnold chief in overall charge

SKILLS' Hove operation is up and running, with former Wallace Arnold manager Tom Hine at the helm.

The new depot was set up to manage Skills' National Express 064 service from Brighton to London but will grow during the Summer to run its own coach tours and provide feeders to Skills' overseas programme, said md Nigel Skill.

At the moment Mr Hine has overall control of 15 drivers and six coaches, from a background of managing Wallace Arnold's Devon-based 80 drivers and 55 vehi-



Tom Hine: at the helm

Regional Round-up ● ● ● Regional R

▼ Norfolk

Belts unwanted

PARENTS and governors of Beetley Primary School, Dereham, have set a 30 mph speed limit on a coach used for a weekly swimming trip. The school says a slower speed will be one solution for parents who object to lap belts. The ruling has dismayed operator, Carters Coaches. Seven of its coaches are equipped with seatbelts to meet the new regulations and the four-mile route from the school utilises a B road outside a 30 mph zone.

▼ Hampshire

Rival helps out

STAGECOACH-owned South West Trains was forced to call in a rival firm to ferry stranded passengers between Eastleigh, Fareham and Portsmouth.

On this occasion, however, it was not the result of the much-publicised staff shortage.

SWT rang Solent Blue Line for emergency buses after a broken track at Fratton Station brought trains to a halt for four hours.

▼ Gatwick

Charges reduced

PARKING charges for minicoaches between nine and 16 seats have been reduced at Gatwick Airport for a trial period.

Until three years ago smaller coaches could use the high-sided car park which is now restricted to up to eight seaters.

This meant an increase from around £2 to £9.66 inclusive of VAT.

Now pre-paid vouchers are eligible for a discount increased to 50 per cent.

The pre-paid discount for larger coaches and buses increases from five to 10 per cent for smaller orders and from 10 to 15 per cent for larger.

Prices may change

gets new 'Skills'

Brighton team with managing director Nigel Skill (right) ready to start

by Mark Williams

cles but his role will evolve with the southern base, said Mr Skill.

"We'll have to concentrate on the 064 service for a couple of months," he said. "The drivers looked a bit nervous for the picture, but they've had Skills' and National Express' training."

The vehicles are near-new Volvo B10M/ Plaxton Premiere 350 automatics with toilet and Wayfarer 3 ticketing. Five plus one spare are required to provide an hourly service to and from the popular coastal resort.

But the Hove base is already handling some of Skill's Midland Travel Coachstyle, low-cost tours via a Croydon sales agent and national advertising and will develop its own tour product using a rebranded operation.

"Clearly, the Midland Travel part of the Coachstyle name is not appropriate, so it will gradually recede to bring Coachstyle to the fore," Mr Skill said. "It will still do the traditional style of coaching which will suit Brighton markets."

Skills' own-branded tours are, said Mr Skill, at the luxury end of the market. Two Setras have been bought for this year's programme but Skills is standardising on Volvos, with Van Hool and Plaxton Premiere bodywork.

■ **Skills gets new operations manager. See People, page 55**

New model will have 8.65-litre DAF engine

▼ Coach

Lighter Futura

BOVA unveils a lighter version of its high-line Futura later this year when the first FHD 12-330 L arrives in the UK.

The new model is identical to the familiar 3.55 metre-high FHD 12-340 in all respects - except the engine is an uprated version of the 8.65 litre unit offered in the low-line FLD-300.

This extends the Bova Futura range offered to operators in the UK to three models. DAF's 329 bhp 11.63 litre engine powers the FHD 12-340 which tips the scales at 12,460 kg. The 3.3 metre-high FLD weighs-in at 10,800 kg and is powered by DAF RS engine rated at 302 bhp - there is also a Cummins C-series option. Although the newcomer to the range uses the smaller capacity RS engine, its power rating is boosted to 333 bhp to make it better suited to its 11,860 kg unladen weight.

However, the FHD 12-330 L gives operators the benefit of a significant 600 kg weight reduction when compared with the FHD 12-340. All three models have double-glazing as standard.

■ **Find out how the updated version of the long-running Futura FHD performs in Mike Morgan's latest *CBW* road test. See pages 27-30.**

CBW

ound-up ● ● ● Regional Round-up ● ● ●

on 1 June when a new concessionaire is scheduled to take over the coach park.

▼ Devon

Bus is fastest

PLYMOUTH Citybus scored an unexpected but welcome victory in a get-to-work competition organised by the city's Derriford Hospital.

Three members of staff living in the same area of Plymouth set off to work at the same time. One travelled by bus, one by car and one by bicycle.

First to arrive was Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust deputy chief executive Martin Cusack, who caught the number 42 bus.

His journey time at 14 minutes 42 seconds beat the cyclist by two minutes.

▼ Coach

Have you seen these two stolen vehicles?

TWO north-east operators have had coaches stolen in the last six weeks.

Fairleys Coaches of Spennymoor lost a Van Hool Alizee Volvo, registration G93 VFP, and Griersons Coaches of Fishburn a Plaxton Premiere Volvo, M668 GTF. Operators who have seen either of these vehicles should contact the police.

▼ Minibus

Council to offer minibus training to other groups

MIDDLESBROUGH Council is planning to offer minibus training and assessor courses to other local authorities, charities and community groups in the area, following the receipt of accreditation from MIDAS - the Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme.

The council already offers minibus training for 'in-house' drivers as well as local schools, Scout groups and voluntary organisations.

It has two qualified MIDAS Driver Assessor Trainers and 412 certified drivers, many of them experienced in wheelchair security, tail-lift operations and road traffic regulations.

Its whole 89-vehicle fleet is fully equipped to recommended safety standards.

The council is the only one in the area to gain MIDAS accreditation - and follows national standards for training of minibus drivers under the scheme.

It has also produced a booklet - *Minibus Safety Guidelines* - designed to improve the safe transport of passengers, particularly school children.

The document gives examples of good practice as well as details of the legislation surrounding the safe use of minibuses.

Council leader, and chair of the Cleveland Police Authority, Councillor Ken Walker, said that the M40 crash highlighted the lack of any nationally recognised training scheme for drivers.

"We now have the skills and experience to assess drivers' capabilities and to give training if needed. When you add that to the improved seatbelt regulations, minibus travel will be safer than at anytime in the past," he said.

▼ Coach

Driver sentenced to community service

A COACH driver has been sentenced to 100 hours' community service, fined £200 and banned for a further year after driving for three months while disqualified.

Jason Ball, of Leicester, drove for GH Watts Coaches of Glenfield for 12 weeks before being caught out during a routine Department of Transport inspection at Bourton-on-the-Water.

▼ Bus

Lowfloors join rural services

Williamsons introduces Excels after receiving grant

by Andrew Jarosz

SHROPSHIRE independent Williamsons Motorways of Knockin Heath has introduced two low-floor Optare Excels on rural service 576.

They follow the award of a grant of £50,000 from the Rural Transport Development Fund, which is managed by the Rural Development Commission. The grant is the first to go towards full-size low-floor vehicles, and has also allowed for an evening service to be introduced from the beginning of April.

The service, which operates from Oswestry to Shrewsbury, and links a number of well-populated villages, is the best performing of the county council's supported services, and has seen a nine per cent increase in patronage since being taken over from Midland Red North last Autumn.

It operates from Mondays to Saturdays, and has been extended to the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital on eight daily journeys.

The service which has now been rebranded as Green Bus 576, features the 40-seater Excels, which have kneeling suspension, and ramps to accommodate up to two wheelchair bound passengers.

With this in mind, Williamsons, which has been providing bus services for over 75 years, will reintroduce their old trading name of Green Bus.

Councillor Roger Walker, chairman of the county council's environment, planning and transportation committee, said the whole package, assembled by the county council included improved roadside publicity, and had promoted regular local consultation.

"We are pleased to be part of this project which makes this rural service accessible to all members of the community, and has only been made possible with assistance from the RDC and investment in the future by Williamsons," Councillor Walker said.

▼ Bus

Ulster manufacturer crack

Low Down Under: interior adapted for Aus

WRIGHTS of Ballymena has broken into an important new export market with a £2.3 million order from Australia's capital city for 25 Crusader-bodied 9.4-metre Dennis Dart SLFs.

The main public transport operator in Canberra, Action Bus (an acronym for Australian Capital Territory Internal Omnibus Network), liaised with Wright, Dennis and Dennis's Australian importer to adapt the Crusader to meet Australia's strict legislative requirements, incorporating such features as Australian-manufactured plug-type doors, Australian seats, a power ramp and an air-conditioned driver's compartment.

The first bus has started its long voyage

Export Cr

Rural partnership: proprietor Howard Williamson; George Farr, Shropshire Public Transport Committee; and Claire Greener, Rural Development Commission

s Australian market

to the southern hemisphere and delivery of the remainder will be completed between June and the end of the year.

Wrights is already looking for further export markets and expects another order to be announced shortly. Opportunities in left-hand-drive markets are being examined and the company says it is working with international vehicle manufacturers to design buses suitable for these expanding markets. CBW

sader: first of 25 buses for Action Bus in Canberra, Australia

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▼ UK

Services take off

FLIGHTLINK, the airport services division of National Express, has increased its daily operations from regional airports to Heathrow and Gatwick.

Non-stop services from East Midlands Airport have been increased from five to seven times a day and there are plans to add a further seven services from Birmingham Airport in May, bringing the total of daily departures to 17.

The increases are part of the Free Flow Heathrow initiative to encourage more passengers to use public transport to and from the airport. Steve McAleavy, Flightlink's director of airport services, said: "Increased demand from business and leisure travel agents - and Heathrow-based airlines - has enabled us to increase the frequency of our departures and improve all aspects of our service."

Flightlink recently opened a new departure lounge at Heathrow's terminal three. From 8 April, all National Express Flightlink and Airlink services will be rebranded under the Flightlink name.

● **National Express is introducing a more efficient ticketing system for agents. Its new PC-based SMART system should make it easier for agents to handle inquiries, reservations, cancellations and refunds. It will also be able to print automated tickets.**

The scheduled coach operator has also launched its *1997 Great Days Out* and *Scottish Breaks* brochures.

Market forces: Shearings Holidays is planning further expansion of its product ranges

▼ UK

Coach rivals targeted

Shearings plans new battle for business in the north west

by William Golden

SHEARINGS Holidays has announced a shake-up of its UK operations in the first phase of a new campaign to target regional coach rivals.

The move comes against the backdrop of ongoing negotiations by parent company, Leisureplus, to take over northern rival, Wallace Arnold, but run it as a separate company.

As a result of the restructuring, Chris Barnes, former UK commercial director, heads a new sales and marketing department. This will have a staff of 75 and control all group travel functions, as well as serving the operator's domestic, European and hotel interests.

It is part of Shearings' confirmed plans to target rival coach companies in the north and north west by initiating a wholesale review of the company's branding and marketing activity.

Mr Barnes said: "While Shearings is undoubtedly a strong and highly-respected brand, we want it to be stronger, particularly on a regional level. How we address that issue is going to be a key priority.

"The review will be centred on how we can better support the retail travel trade, while already acknowledging that the trade will benefit from a planned expansion of our product range and a more clearly focused sales and marketing activity."

Shearings has also merged its UK & Ireland Product and Theme Break departments, paving the way for further growth in the specialist and closed-season products. The themed break sector has seen massive growth in the past three years, rising from 10,000 to 70,000 holiday sales.

"Themed breaks have reached a critical mass in terms of sales volumes and relevance to our core holiday product," said Mr Barnes. "Higher sales and a shift to longer hotel stays meant that greater liaison with the UK department was occurring, particularly in contracting and fleet utilisation. A merger was the logical conclusion."

The setting up of a dedicated marketing department follows the installation of a new £1.6 million computer reservations and management information system.

The Toccata set-up allows Shearings to better utilise its UK feeder network of 1,000 joining points, enabling it to offer shorter specialist breaks.

"We hope to introduce a lot of tours that up to now have only been available to group travel organisers," said Mr Barnes. "We can do this because Toccata has enabled us to put shorter-duration products on to the national feeder networks, whereas previously they were only available from single or a very limited number of departure points."

Mr Barnes said there would be no redundancies following the restructuring and all staff would be redeployed in the new departments.

Shearings' European and Worldwide Product department is unaffected by the changes and Brian Hawe continues as commercial director, with overseas theme breaks remaining his responsibility. CBW

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Ruling the waves: P&O is the most powerful group with the best ships, says chairman

▼ UK

'Don't block merger'

P&O chairman warns of bitter ferry battle in the Channel

A WARNING there would be "blood on the carpet" if the merger between P&O European Ferries and rival Stena Line was blocked has come from Lord Sterling, the P&O chairman.

The Monopolies and Mergers Commission (MCC) was to have made a decision by 6 March but the Government has deferred all decisions on MMC referrals until after the General Election on 1 May.

Lord Sterling said it was unlikely the merger would be blocked but, if it were, it was inevitable there would be one player - P&O - dominating the short-sea Channel ferry routes. He said: "We are the most powerful group with the best ships. There may be some blood on the carpet but, in the end, there would be one dominant ferry group."

The more likely scenario, he

by William Golden

said, was that the merger would be given the go-ahead. Under its terms, the companies will pool services, leading to job cuts and ships being withdrawn from service. It is hoped that savings will top £75 million.

The moment approval is given, Lord Sterling said P&O was ready to act. "We have been ready to go since the end of last year," he said. "The second we are given the go-ahead, the tariffs will be merged and ships taken off the route."

Both P&O and Stena Line are hopeful of MMC approval as early as possible, so the new venture could be up and running in time for the peak season. However, other industry insiders believe they are being over-optimistic.

Lord Sterling gave his warning as he announced details of the shipping, cruising and property group's 1996 results. Overall, pre-tax profits grew by £13 million on the previous year - to £333 million, but there was a marked fall in the ferry division. There, profits were down 41 per cent, from £74 to £41 million, due to fierce competition from Eurotunnel, principally in the freight sector.

As for the volume of coaches, P&O European Ferries remains the market leader, particularly on the short-sea Channel crossings.

● **Peter Stratton, P&O marketing and sales director, is leaving at the end of May to become commercial director at Connex, the rail operator that holds the franchise for London-Kent services.**

Anna McClafferty has quit as Stena Line's national sales manager to become client services manager for CPM, the field marketing company.

▼ UK

Connect on the campus

OPERATORS looking for quality accommodation at budget prices should make sure they visit the 1997 Connect Show on Tuesday, 29 April. It is organised by Connect Venues, the largest consortium promoting university and college facilities, and provides operators with the opportunity to meet 60 representatives from academic venues in one day.

Elizabeth Sandell, the consortium chairman, said: "I am delighted that, in only its third year, the Connect Show is proving so popular. Its overwhelming success indicates that coach operators and group organisers are becoming more aware that the members of Connect Venues offer an excellent service at extremely competitive prices."

The 1997 Connect Show is be held at the New Connaught Rooms, Covent Garden, and the doors will be open from 10am to 4pm. Admission is free. More details from Terry Billingham, at Connect Venues, on 0114 249 3090 (fax 0114 249 3091).

CBW

Eurowatch

WEATHER

City	Average temperature last week	City	Average temperature last week
Amsterdam	11C/52F	Madrid	16C/61F
Athens	12C/54F	Oslo	3F/37F
Berlin	9C/48F	Paris	16C/61F
Brussels	13C/55F	Rome	19C/66F
Dublin	14C/57F	Stockholm	1C/34F
Lisbon	20C/68F	Vienna	8C/46F
Luxembourg	10C/50F	Zurich	11/52F

DIESEL PRICES

Courtesy AA Roadwatch

Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling	Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling
Austria	0.51	Luxembourg	0.42
Belgium	0.51	Netherlands	0.52
Eire	0.57	Norway	0.70
France	0.51	Portugal	0.44
Germany	0.49	Spain	0.44
Greece	0.41	Sweden	0.57
Italy	0.57	Switzerland	0.57

HOLIDAY POUND

Country	Currency exchange rate	Country	Currency exchange rate
Austria	18.66 Sch/£	Italy	2,685 Lire/£
Belgium	54.72 BFr/£	Netherlands	2.96 Gld/£
Denmark	10.17 K/£	Norway	10.47 NKr/£
Eire	0.99 Punt/£	Portugal	267 Es/£
France	8.92 F/£	Spain	224 Pta/£
Germany	2.65 DM/£	Sweden	12.18 SKr/£
Greece	419 D/£	Switzerland	2.31 SFr/£

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CBW
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The PSV industry's news weekly

COACH & BUS WEEK EDITORIAL FEATURES LIST 1997

JANUARY	Computer Systems andSoftware
FEBRUARY	Accessible Transport
MARCH	Coach and Bus Live - preview issue 15th - British Travel Trade Fair preview
APRIL	Coach and Bus Live - show and review issue
MAY	Engines and Spares
JUNE	GlassRepair/Replacement/Tyres
JULY	Insurance/Vehicle recovery
AUGUST	Oil/Liubricants/Fuels
SEPTEMBER	Accessible transport/welfare
OCTOBER	Bus and Coach '97 showissues
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1989 (F & G) LEYLAND TIGER *(Ref: L1276/C)*
55 seats + 24 standing, livery white, Alexander Belfast service bus body, Cummins L10, ZF automatic gearbox, livery white. Choice

1990 (G) LEYLAND PLAXTON TIGER 3200
Ref: L/389/C
50 reclining seats, 6 speed ZF gearbox, double glazed, toilet, radio/PA system, drinks servery, white livery

1983 (PP) MAN VAN HOOL ASTRON
57 reclining seats, new Grafitti moquette, twin deck videos, hot drinks machine, fridge, toilet, 3 drivers bunks, reconditioned engine

1984 (PP) LEYLAND PLAXTON TIGER 3200
49 reclining seats, semi-automatic gearbox, power door, toilet, radio/PA system, TV, drinks, livery white

1990 (G) TOYOTA OPTIMO II CAETANO
Ref: T/330/C
18 seats and courier seat, power door, radio/PA, seat belts, livery blue, MoT 17.07.97

1989 (G) DAF SB2300 VAN HOOL ALIZEE *Ref: D/391/C*
51 reclining seats, double glazed, drivers bunk, centre toilet, radio/PA system 2 X TV's, livery white

1985 (PP) DENNIS DUPLE 425 *Ref: D/395/C*
55 seats, manual 6 speed gearbox, double glazed, rear floor mounted toilet, radio/PA, TV/video, MoT 24.05.97

1990 (PP) DAF DHSB3000 VAN HOOL ALIZEE
Ref: D/396/C
51/55 seats, 7 speed ZF gearbox, double glazed, toilet, radio/PA, livery white/blue, MoT 15.11.97

1996 (N) VOLVO VAN HOOL ALIZEE *Ref: V/394/C*
44 seats, air con, double glazed, continental door, toilet, radio/speech pa/TV/video, fridge, servery, MoT 12.03.98.

1984 (PP) VOLVO B10M PLAXTON *Ref: V/397/C*
53 rec seats, 6 speed ZF gearbox, double glazed, centre continental door, power door, demountable toilet, livery blue two tone, MoT 30.10.97

1989 (PP) MAN 16.290 HOOL (TELMA) – JONCKHEERE DEAUVILLE
Ref: M/334/C.
49 seats and crew seat, centre sunken toilet, servery, fridge, continental door, radio PA cassette, TV, video, double glazed

1991 (H) VOLVO B10M MKIII 273 BHP (TELMA) VAN HOOL ALIZEE
53 seats and crew seat, radio PA cassette, double glazed, blinds to side windows, (lap type) seat belts. Choice

1992 (J) VOLVO B10M MKIII VAN HOOL ALIZEE
49 reclining seats, ZF 6 speed S690 manual gearbox, Webasto, ABS braking system, air suspension, brown moquette, courier seat, air opened front left hand plug entrance door, 1/2 rear emergency exit door to right hand side, centre continental exit door to right hand side, split front screen, double glazed side bays with blinds/rear curtains, radio/pa system, centre mounted toilet, centre servery, centre crew compartment. Choice

1992 (J) SCANIA K93CR/273 PLAXTON PREMIERE 3200
Ref: S/357/C
53 seats, radio PA cassette, double glazed, blinds to side windows, (lap type) seat belts.
Choice

1990 (G) VOLVO B10M MK III VAN HOOL ALIZEE
53 reclining seats, ZF 6 speed S690 manual gearbox, Telma, ABS, air suspension with front kneel facility and ferry lift, blue moquette, courier seat, air opened front left hand plug entrance door, 1/2 rear emergency exit door to right hand side, twin roof vents, double glazed, blinds/curtains, radio/pa system. Choice

1991 (H) VOLVO B10M MKIII VAN HOOL ALIZEE
53 reclining seats, including seat belts, driver & courier seat, brown moquette, ZF 6 speed S690 manual gearbox, 1/2 rear emergency exit door to right hand side, twin roof vents, forced air ventilation, double glazed side bays with blinds, radio/pa system. Choice

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▼ Licensing

Fresh licence for Geoffre

Former partner in banned op 're-enters' industry

by Michael Jewell

GEOFFREY Brown, a former partner in Brown Bros of Durham, a firm whose licence was revoked following a series of drivers' hours and tachograph convictions, has obtained a fresh licence in his own name.

Mr Brown, of 36 Deerness Heights, Brandon, Durham, appeared before North Eastern traffic commissioner Keith Waterworth at a Leeds public inquiry. He was seeking a new international licence for three single deckers and a double decker.

Following the revocation of the Brown Bros licence, Angela Brown, Mr Brown's sister-in-law, was granted a licence in August 1995. The revocation followed drivers' hours and tachograph convictions for which Mr Brown's brother, Ralph, had been fined a total of £4,500 and ordered to pay £720 prosecution costs by Durham Magistrates. Mrs Brown was granted a licence by the commissioner on the condition that her husband only played a limited part in the business. The licence held by Mrs Brown was cut earlier this year (*CBW*, 1 February).

Mr Waterworth said he had to be certain in terms of integrity and capacity that Mr Brown was fit to hold an O-licence. It was important that, when people were involved in the transport of the public, they were competent people who would operate vehicles in a roadworthy condition and within the law, and not break the law for profit or for any other reason.

For Mr Brown, Toby Wynn agreed he had been a partner with his brother Ralph in Brown Bros, whose licence had been revoked in May 1995. He said Mr Brown was currently working as a maintenance engineer with Crossroads Coaches, who held a licence for eight vehicles.

His intention was to acquire four vehicles and hire them out, using Crossroads premises for the parking and the maintenance of the vehicles. Mr Brown had no role in the management or otherwise in the licence held by his sister-in-law. Mr Brown had not spoken to his brother for 18 months and his sister-in-law for 12 months. He had recently obtained a county court judgment in the sum of over £24,000 against his brother in relation to money owed following the dissolution of the partnership. On the break-up of the partnership, Mr Brown had signed a covenant not to enter the coach business within a 10-mile radius of Durham Cathedral for three years. That period was now over. The tachograph offences that led to the revocation of what was effectively Ralph Brown's business had been committed some 15 months after Geoffrey Brown had retired from the business.

Mr Brown said he had made arrangements with the firm checking Crossroads' tachograph charts, Chartwise UK, to check his charts. He would not be competing directly with Crossroads for the same kind of business. He would be concentrating on local contracts and private hire. He did not expect to have any significant business abroad. He had sought an international licence because he held an international qualification.

He had retired from Brown Bros in January 1994, said Mr Brown. He was asked to go back as transport manager when Angela applied for her

O-licence held by Buzz Co-operative for 14 vehicles is cut by one

▼ Maintenance

Authorisation is cut

BUZZ Co-Operative Ltd's O-licence authorisation has been cut from 14 vehicles to 13, and a further three vehicles have been suspended for a month by Eastern traffic commissoner Brigadier Compton Boyd.

The company, of Denmar House, River Way, Harlow, Essex, appeared at a Cambridge disciplinary inquiry because of concern over its vehicle maintenance standards.

▼ Maintenance

Greenli

MAINTENANCE problems suffered by Stoke-on-Trent based Greenline were blamed on a failure to appreciate the punishment that minibuses would take on local service operation, when the firm escaped with a warning at a Birmingham disciplinary inquiry.

West Midland deputy traffic commissioner Alan Cattell had been considering the revocation, suspension or curtailment of the licence for four single deckers held by Conrad Lubinski and David Johnson, who trade as Greenline, of 24 Fieldway, Blurton, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire.

Mr Cattell said he had grounds for taking action in that the partners had failed to fulfil a statement of intention that they would keep their buses in a fit and serviceable condition, that prohibition notices had been issued to Greenline vehicles, and that there had been a material change of circumstances which had not been notified to the Traffic Area. He was also taking into account a maintenance report dated January of this year which the Vehicle Inspectorate had marked as unsatisfactory.

Mr Johnson told the deputy commissioner they had started with five 16-seater minibuses in November 1996 running a service between Hanley and Longton, via Bentilee. They had not realised the punishment the buses would take.

Another operator on the route, a FirstBus subsidiary, increased its frequency to a bus every minute, which meant there were 14 buses in 12 minutes on the route. They had tried to fight them but they had not been up to it.

Until January they

ey Brown

licence, and he was named initially in her application. However, he decided he did not want to do it as it was just a front for his brother.

After Mr Brown said he had £50,000 on instant call to finance the business and he had another £80,000 in an investment account, Mr Waterworth said he did not think there was a problem over finance.

But he said it was plain Mr Brown's behaviour and that of his brother in the operation of vehicles a number of years ago was not what it should have been.

Mr Brown said much of what had happened had occurred after he had left. He had known what was going on and he had tried to stop it. That was why he decided to leave. He had been mainly engaged on the engineering side and his brother had been in charge of the administration side. He agreed that most of the offences occurred on international journeys. He gave an assurance that Ralph Brown would play no part in his business.

Mr Waterworth said he was only prepared to grant a national licence for the time being to see if Mr Brown could operate properly. He could then come back for an international licence at a later date if there were no problems.

He wanted a copy of the contract with Chartwise, indicating the tachograph charts would be checked by them on a monthly basis within 28 days. He also required the registration numbers of the vehicles, and details of their owners, their registered keepers and who was insuring them, before Mr Brown started to operate.

He was reasonably satisfied Mr Brown understood the responsibilities of an operator, said Mr Waterworth. It was a fresh page and it was up to Mr Brown to demonstrate he could operate properly and that nothing would be found amiss when checks were carried out by vehicle and traffic examiners in the next six months or so. If there were any problems, the guillotine would come down very quickly in Mr Brown's case, given the past history.

Drivers' Hours

Coach driver murdered in Prague, Browns of Durham inquiry is told

Traffic examiner who was on holiday tell

inquiry of incident

Maintenance

Gallag

BROWNS

New operation is separate from business run by Angela Brown

ne of Stoke given warning

had concentrated on the service side of things and they admitted they had been watching the wrong things, said Mr Johnson.

Following the vehicle examiner's visit in January, they had decided they did not have the right equipment for the job, said Mr Johnson. They had cancelled the local service registration and parked all the minibuses up.

They had just purchased a 53-seater Plaxton to do a school contract and had now decided to go into the big-bus side of the industry. They had put in for more contracts and had obtained two. They also had private hire work at night. They now had no hassle from any other bus company and they were getting on to an even keel.

Mr Johnson said they admitted that, at every step of the way, they had not been very good at running the business. However, everything the vehicle examiner had suggested they had done. They were learning and they thought they had now got it straight. They were running three vehicles at the moment and they were contracting all their maintenance out to the main Renault agency in the area.

> 'Everything the vehicle examiner had suggested they had done. They were learning and they thought they had now got it straight'

Questioned by Mr Cattell, Mr Johnson said the drivers checked the vehicles daily using a defect sheet. If a defect was found either their own fitter would repair it or, if it was a major fault, the work would be contracted out. They had not got a great deal of work but there was enough to pay the rent. All the minibuses, apart from two which had prohibition notices on them, were up for sale.

The vehicle examiner had suggested that their nominated transport manager was just a figurehead and he had now got his own CPC, said Mr Johnson.

He said he drove on the school contracts himself. He had driven on the local service in the past, but he now had plenty of time to organise things.

They wanted to keep one of the minibuses. Their fitter they had was an ex-PMT employee and they had asked him to pick out the best one for use on a small school contract which required seatbelts.

The only equipment they had missing from a basic garage was a ramp. Now they had gone into the big-bus side of the industry they were looking at new premises with an inspection pit to which they hoped to transfer the operation and then their own fitter could undertake the maintenance work.

The buses were inspected every four weeks and the minibus would be inspected every two weeks. They'd had to get rid of all their previous drivers and he now tried to share the work out between them to keep them going.

Mr Johnson said they had bought two buses from an operator in Cornwall which, though old, one being a 1978 vehicle, were immaculate underneath. They had told the commercial garage undertaking their maintenance to bring the third vehicle, a Bedford, up to the same standard.

Mr Cattell said he wanted copies of all the MOT certificates of the vehicles the firm was now using, or was likely to use in the future to be produced at the Traffic Area Office. As this was the firm's first appearance at a public inquiry, and it had only been operating since last September, he would issue a warning.

Drivers' Hours: when is an employer liable?

Road transport lawyer Martin Arthur gives you, the operator, advice on legal matters

FOR Driver's Hours offences, not only the driver but "any other person (being the offender's employer or a person to whose orders the offender was subject) who caused or permitted the contravention shall be liable." Transport Act 1968 s.96 (11) and (11) (A).

Section 97, which governs the installation and use of recording equipment states: "No person shall use, or cause or permit to be used..."

When, then, can it be said an employer has "caused" or "permitted" something to happen? For an employer to be found to have caused a particular situation it would have to be shown there was positive causation. In the case of Redhead Freight Ltd v Shulman (1989) RTR 1, a driver employed by a road haulage firm handed 39 tachograph record sheets to the company's transport manager.

Only one record sheet was correctly completed. The company was charged with causing the driver to use the vehicle of which the recording equipment was not being used as required by article 15(5) Regulation 3821/85. It was convicted by the magistrates and appealed.

The appeal was allowed. In his judgment Woolf LJ stated "... in my view, there was not anything which fulfilled that requirement that is necessary to establish causing... Indeed, the very fact that, on one occasion, the driver did not commit an offence and completed the record correctly emphasises the problem from the prosecution's point of view. This was not a situation where the inevitable consequence of sending this driver out on a journey was that a tachograph was not going to be properly completed..."

An allegation of causing, therefore, requires evidence of a positive mandate or instruction to do something.

An allegation that an employer permitted an offence involves proof that the employer had actual knowledge of the circumstances or shut his eyes to the obvious. In the case of Grays Haulage Co Ltd v Arnold (1966) 1 All E R a lorry driver drove from 10am to 10.32 pm with only an hour's rest between 2pm and 3pm. The prosecution case was that the employers were guilty of permitting the offence in that they had failed to take certain steps which might have prevented the driver from acting as he did. The magistrates court found the offence proved but the company successfully appealed against the decision. In his judgment Lord Parker, C.J. stated: "It is of the very essence of the offence of permitting someone to do something that there should be knowledge... knowledge is really of two kinds, actual knowledge, and knowledge which arises either from shutting one's eyes to the obvious or, what is very much the same thing put in another way, failing to do something or doing something not caring whether contravention takes place or not."

'For there to be a finding against an employer of causing a Drivers' Hours offence there has to be positive evidence of causation'

In Knowles Transport Ltd v Russell (1975) RTR 87 a haulage company operated a system of checking drivers' records whereby they were examined by two clerks. Inspection of the records by an authorised traffic examiner disclosed offences and the company was duly convicted by a magistrates court of having permitted offences. Evidence was given that the company had operated for many years and its checking systems had worked successfully in the past. The company's managing director admitted that the company without noting or acting on the irregularity had probably paid the driver for the hours which he had worked above the permitted maximum. The magistrates were of the opinion that the company had shut its eyes to the breaches by taking no action on them. The company successfully appealed and it was held that in the circumstances of the case there was no foundation for inferring that the company had permitted the commission of the offences when it had learned of the irregularities after the offences had been committed.

CONCLUSION

For there to be a finding against an employer of **causing** a Drivers' Hours offence there has to be positive evidence of causation. For a finding of **permitting** a Drivers' Hours offence there has to be evidence of actual knowledge, or of circumstances which indicate that the employer shut his eyes to the obvious or permitted a situation not caring whether contravention took place or not.

Tachograph offences have been subject of various appeals

Martin Arthur is a lawyer specialising in road transport and principal of the Road Transport Law Bureau, Cambridge

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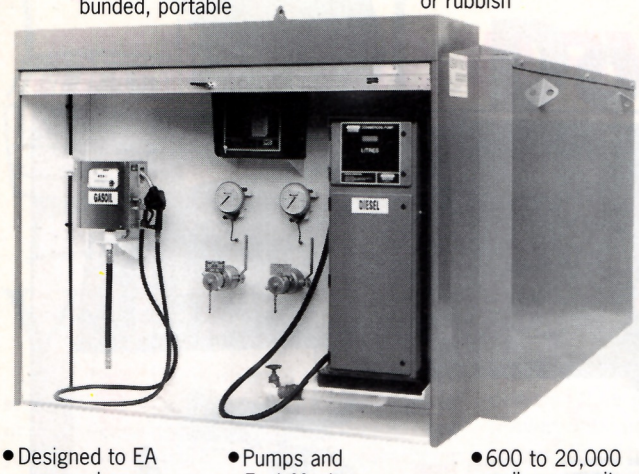

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1991 J IVECO 4910 Mellor coach built, 12 seats/6 wheelchairs, MoT Oct '97.
1991 H TOYOTA OPTIMO MKII, 17/21 seats, demountable toilet, 130,000 miles, MoT May '97
1990 H MERCEDES 811D, PMT, AMI, coach built, 33 seats, luggage racks, power door, radio, white/red, exterior, long MoT.
1989 G IVECO 49.10 Robin Hood, 23/25 seats, luggage pen, power door, choice of 5.
1987 E OPTARE CITYPACER 2.5 TURBO, 25 coach seats, power door, white exterior, MoT May '97.
1985 B LEYLAND TIGER 245 DUPLE LASER II, semi auto, 53 seats, power door, long MoT.
1983 Y FORD 360 T DUPLE DOMINANT IV, 8.5 metre, 35 recent re-trimmed seats, p/door, radio/PA, MoT Dec '96.
1982 Y BOVA EUROPA, recent DAF engine, 52 recliners, courier seat, MoT June '97.

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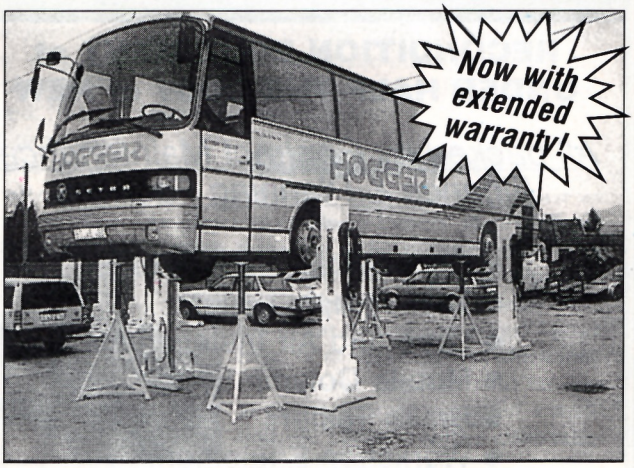

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Don't shoot the messenger...

YOU do not have to like what I am about to say. You may think it makes good sense or you may feel threatened by it. You may view it as vital or inconsequential. You may may feel it either comforts or distresses passengers. Like it or hate it, I beg you to, nevertheless, believe this: more than ever operators need to be doing everything possible to ensure total compliance with hours regulations and to have near perfection in the mechanical condition of vehicles.

Why? What's new? Firstly, PSVs have become high profile in public and political perception. It used to be overloaded, smoking lorries that were taking the flack. Now it is us. The complexity of PSV driving hours rules meant they were so hard for traffic examiners to check they barely bothered.

No longer. In-depth examination of tachograph and other records are to be expected. Not just a superficial examination of a few discs. I hear reports of examination of six months' worth of discs, sometimes 1,000 or more, being made on a routine basis. That is to say when there is no reason to expect any flagrant violations.

Heed this warning. Make sure those allocating work are fully genned up on driving hours rules - and apply them, that drivers are equally well advised - and also apply them. And then check, by monitoring discs, that there is compliance - and if not take even further steps to bring the recalcitrant in to line. Keep a record of what has been checked and what advice and warnings have been given.

That's just the routine bit. The second piece of writing on the wall that all operators should heed is the current appointment by the Vehicle Inspectorate of Intelligence Officers. Starting any day now someone will be seeking out, and listening to, any information obtainable about suspicions of operating malpractice.

From where? Anywhere: like local authorities (who may have concerns about contract vehicles), customers (who may suspect vehicle defects or drivers' hours infractions), from dismissed drivers (who may feel they have been expected to drive unlawfully), from other enforcement agencies (say, evidence of PAYE evasion) and, of course, other operators (who may make genuine complaints, or who have been known to use things like Smoky Vehicle Hotlines to make life tough for competitors).

A 'Dodgy Operator' hotline is a distinct possibility. This is a refinement of the targeting the Vehicle Inspectorate has been practising with some success for the last couple of years.

Surprise, surprise. There will be a lot more 'Operation Tourists' this year. Vehicle checks in school bus parks may well increase, too. Why? Because they are all highly effective in detecting unsafe vehicles. Bitch as much as you like about bad, and ill-informed publicity or PG9s issued for what may seem to be trivial defects. The plain truth is that these checks would not be necessary, and would not be done repeatedly, if only operators had got the message and improved the mechanical standards of PSVs. It may be not as bad as it's painted, but nor is it as good as it should be.

The easy way is to believe what I say and do whatever is necessary to become fire-proof. The hard way to learn this message is with a handful of PG9s, a summons or two, and a call-up letter for a Public Inquiry. I did say you don't have to like the message, but do listen to the messenger before you savage him. Ignore the message if you dare. The JEDI is almost ready to get you. JEDI (the Joint Enforcement Data Initiative), in relation to the Vehicle Inspectorate, means that, within months every vehicle and traffic examiner will have a lap-top computer, which will be updated from (and down-loaded to) a central computer each day. From this the enforcement history of the vehicle, the operator and even the driver, will be known almost before the wheels have stopped turning at a roadside inspection point. Any PG9 will be computer printed and will be logged straight into the system. The better the score of PG9s, one might assume, the bigger the target for spot-checking.

I paint this (very true-life) picture of a toughening enforcement regime to try to bring home to readers the need to do everything possible to maintain good repute and avoid prohibitions like the plague. Although some defects will, inevitably, occur on the road, I suspect the vast majority of prohibitions issued are avoidable.

My recommendations to this end are that every operator should now:

- Aim to improve first-time test pass performance
- Check out the competence of engineering staff and adequacy of facilities
- Consider suitability of routine maintenance inspection periods
- Ensure that an effective defect reporting system is in place and that it is being followed by driving and engineering staff
- Ensure that daily walk-round checks are being done.
- Appraise the parts that need to be carried on coaches to effect repairs of items which can be broken or fail in service, but can be replaced by the driver (bulbs, mirror glasses and break- glass hammers are the obvious ones).
- Review attitudes, procedures and even pricing to allow for a defective vehicle to be taken out of service.

This latter point merits expansion. It really represents quite a shift in practice from what, for me, prevailed up to about 10 years ago. For many I think it still applies today. It is simply the habit that goes back to the dawn of motoring, of limping vehicles home unless they actually lie down and die. The variant is running vehicles in a defective condition while awaiting a part which is on order.

To my discredit, although it was common practice at the time, I admit to bringing coaches home, carrying passengers, after windows had been shattered; of completing journeys after accident damage had taken out a cluster of rear lights; of battling on after the windscreen wipers had packed up; and of managing without functioning demisters.

We have all done these sort of things in the past, and we all need to stop doing them right now. We also have to watch out for the new illegalities: of using vehicles without school bus signs, or having insufficient seats on minibuses and coaches with functional seatbelts for the number of children carried.

For some it really goes against the grain to suggest a mechanically serviceable vehicle should be grounded because of a minor omission or defect which may have little or no impact on safety. But that is now how it is. Operating vehicles in an illegal or defective state may be very prejudicial to the ability to stay in the industry. Like it or lump it. CBW

Do whatever is necessary to become 'fire-proof'

Ace of a lunchtime retreat

WHAT may be England's oldest surviving purpose-built car factory has been saved from demolition and is set for reincarnation - as a pub.

After many years of uncertainty, the former Dennis works in Guildford now has an assured future.

We understand there is no truth in the rumours that the new tenants will be serving home-brewed ales such as Trident or Dominator.

But the Grade II listed building should provide an Ace of a lunchtime retreat for Dennis executives to Dart into while they reflect on the company's past glories.

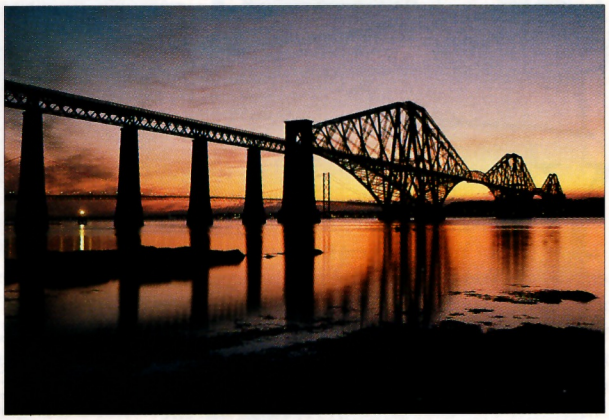
Lord James kept busy

THE cover pic of the Forth Bridge on the latest edition of *CBW*'s tourism monthly for coach operators, *Coach Tours and Excursions*, reminded our Diary scribe of a recent press release from the Scottish Office.

We quote: "Following his long-running interest in the condition of the Forth Bridge, the Rt Hon Lord Douglas-Hamilton QC MP, Minister of State at The Scottish Office, carried out a detailed inspection of the structure from North to South Queensferry today."

It seems a tall order for one man to inspect the historic rail crossing by himself and, knowing how long it takes to paint the famous bridge, we wondered if, once he finished, he was forced to restart the inspection all over again.

Has anyone seen Lord James recently?



Forth Bridge: detailed inspection by Lord James

Did Damon Hill strike in sympathy?

THE increasingly bitter public transport strike in Australia's state of Victoria made its mark on the first race of the new Formula 1 Grand Prix season held in Melbourne.

With almost 10,000 bus, train and tram (still tram and not light rail, Down Under) workers on a 48-hour strike, attendance was decidedly down over the busy weekend.

The state premier is by all accounts livid at the disruption during the city's prestige weekend. Far from being conciliatory in tone about the workers' extensive grievances, he is talking of outlawing strikes on public transport altogether.

Nevertheless, the Aussie humour still shines through. When World Champion, Damon Hill, ground to a terminal halt on the parade lap in his new Arrows chariot, a native wit suggested the Brit had come out in sympathy. CBW

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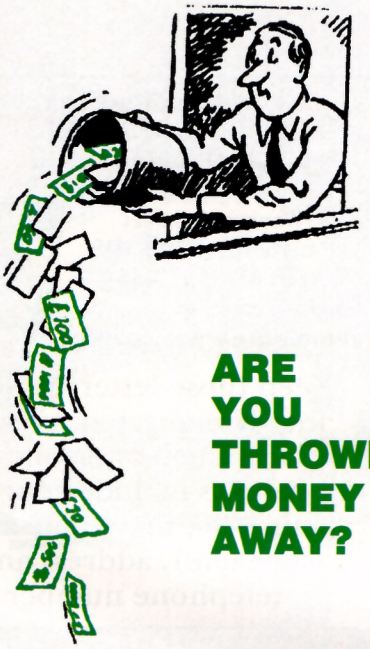

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1989 LEYLAND TIGER 290 DUPLE 320 53 reclining seats, orange/brown moquette, double glazed windows, blinds, radio/tape/P.A., TELMA retarder, autolube, finished cream/orange. .....**M.O.T. OCTOBER 1997**

1987 TOYOTA OPTIMO (M) 19 seats, red striped moquette, tinted side windows, power entrance door, finished all white. .....**M.O.T. MAY 1997**

1989 MERCEDES BENZ 0303 (M) 12M 53 reclining seats (VOGEL), red/ orange/yellow moquette, courier seat, rear continental door, tinted side windows with roller blinds, power entrance door with peage window, full SUTRAK air conditioning, carpet to gangway and driver's area, finished red/cream. .....**M.O.T JULY 1997**

1982 LEYLAND TIGER (M) 12M DUPLE GOLDLINER IV 49 reclining seats, brown/orange moquette, courier seat, rear continental door, tinted double glazed side windows, power entrance door with peage window, rear offside sunken toilet, drinks machine, crew compartment, finished white/red. .....**M.O.T. MARCH 1997**

1987 LEYLAND TIGER 260 12M DUPLE 320 53 reclining seats, brown striped moquette, rear n/s floor mounted toilet, tinted side windows, power entrance door, finished cream/duo red. .....**M.O.T. MARCH 1998**

1985 LEYLAND TIGER (S/A) CUMMINS L10 ENGINE DUPLE LAZER II 11M 53 seats, blue/grey moquette, double glazed tinted side windows, power entrance door, finished cream/duo red. .....**M.O.T. MARCH 1997**

1985 DAF DKFL VAN HOOL ALIZEE (M)12M 50 reclining seats (recent retrim) in Holdsworth Brown moquette, courier seat, rear offside floor mounted toilet, tinted side windows with curtains, power entrance door, finished cream/red/ maroon. .....**M.O.T. JULY 1997**

1992 DENNIS JAVELIN (M)11M DUPLE 320 55 seats, brown striped moquette, tinted side windows, power entrance door, finished cream/red/ maroon. ..... **M.O.T. MARCH 1998**

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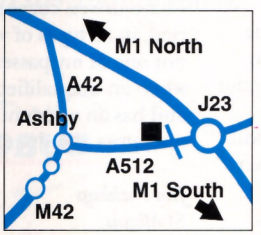

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Please don't dismiss idea of road pricing

From Tony Francis

Please do not dismiss the idea of road pricing, on virtually all roads, not just motorways, but seek a consensus among the industry (*CBW*, 22 March).

Compared to subjects such as health and education, transport is not a major issue for the political arena and for once the media has started to confront the country with the problem, and a solution.

You are right to campaign for conditions to be provided, so that quality bus services can be maintained to a consistent standard. The energies of the industry and those of local authorities must be increasingly harnessed to this objective.

There is still much to be done in this respect but, in the end, there will always be only a finite quantity of road space for a seemingly infinite volume of road traffic, the bulk of which is made up of private cars, often with an average load factor of little over one.

There must be enormous frustration in running buses carrying large numbers of passengers and with the potential of carrying more, but on roads filled with one of the most inefficient urban people carriers ever made.

Road space, like any other commodity, has a value and should be used to its best advantage.

Vehicles which represent good use of the highway, such as coaches and buses, together with priority measures, could do well in a system of road pricing.

Indeed, it could be argued that they need not pay at all.

Why not campaign for the revenue raised to be directly related to the investment in the transport infrastructure?

We do not have to accept HM Treasury traditions for ever.

People might well accept the situation where the payments made went directly to the provision of better bus services, even some better roads and, dare I say, light-rail schemes.

Tony Francis
Bromley
Kent

Write to: The Editor
Coach and Bus Week
EMAP Automotive Ltd
Wentworth House
Wentworth Street
Peterborough PE1 1DS
fax: 01733 467154
e-mail: FrankF@
automotive.emap.co.uk

Keep those letters rolling in. If requested, we will publish them anonymously, but always include your full name (ie, first name and surname), address and telephone number

CORGI CLASSICS

Letter of the week wins a Corgi Classics model bus

Coaches not to blame

From Jim Vockings

What a lot of rubbish was uttered by people (supposedly experts) about seatbelts in coaches in the *Here and Now* programme (CBW, 1 March). I sympathise deeply with the father who lost his daughter in a minicoach crash and with all other parents who lost their children in this terrible disaster.

It should never have happened and, if a professional coach driver had been driving instead of a teacher who had been working all day, it probably wouldn't have.

The father should have refused to let his daughter travel on the vehicle, not now try to get seatbelts fitted on to safe coaches.

After the accident the media shouted "coach crash children killed". It was nothing to do with "coaches" but we in the coach industry get the blame. A few days later a Scout master driving a minicoach crashed. Again the media said it was another 'coach' crash. Rubbish.

The father said that, since the crash, he had urged all parents to push for seatbelts on coaches. I can assure him that coaches are quite safe without them but, if they want seatbelts installed, we will have them put in, but who will explain to their children that they are for their safety and not to be tampered with?

These seatbelts are expensive. One of our coaches had eight of the buckles cut off by school children and thrown away. They also push chewing gum, metal objects, bits of pencil and other objects into the clasps. Who is going to pay for this vandalism?

The programme did not do its homework. They should have found out the fatality rate between professionally transported school children in unseatbelted coaches supplied by coach firms, and school children transported by other means of transport with seatbelts.

Have you ever seen the mums with their small family cars with maybe eight or more children all crammed in the car on their way to school? Most cars have five belts in so it speaks for itself, not all the children can be belted in, and these are the mums who won't let their children travel in a coach without seatbelts.

The test also was a load of rubbish. There are too many so-called experts who go around shouting their mouths off causing panic when there is no need. I have been driving coaches all over the world for the last 37 years without seatbelts until last year.

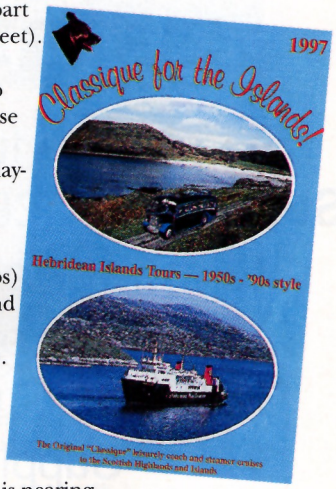
I could not estimate the number of miles I have driven coaches or passengers I have carried, in all types of weather. During this time not one of my passengers has been injured but when an unqualified person tries to do our job and has an accident the blame is put on coach operators and drivers.

Jim Vockings
St Albans
Herts

Know of these units?

From David Dean

I have had no success in obtaining Clayton Dewandre vacuum servo brake parts for my 1950 Leyland Tiger PS2 and AEC Regal 111 (both of which form part of our tour fleet). Is there any operator who may have these units?



The Clayton numbers are VM8 and VM14/175 (master servos) plus FW38 and FW40 (front wheel servos).

The coaches are in beautiful condition (the Leyland is nearing completion of a four-year body rebuild) so I do not wish to be stumped.

David Dean
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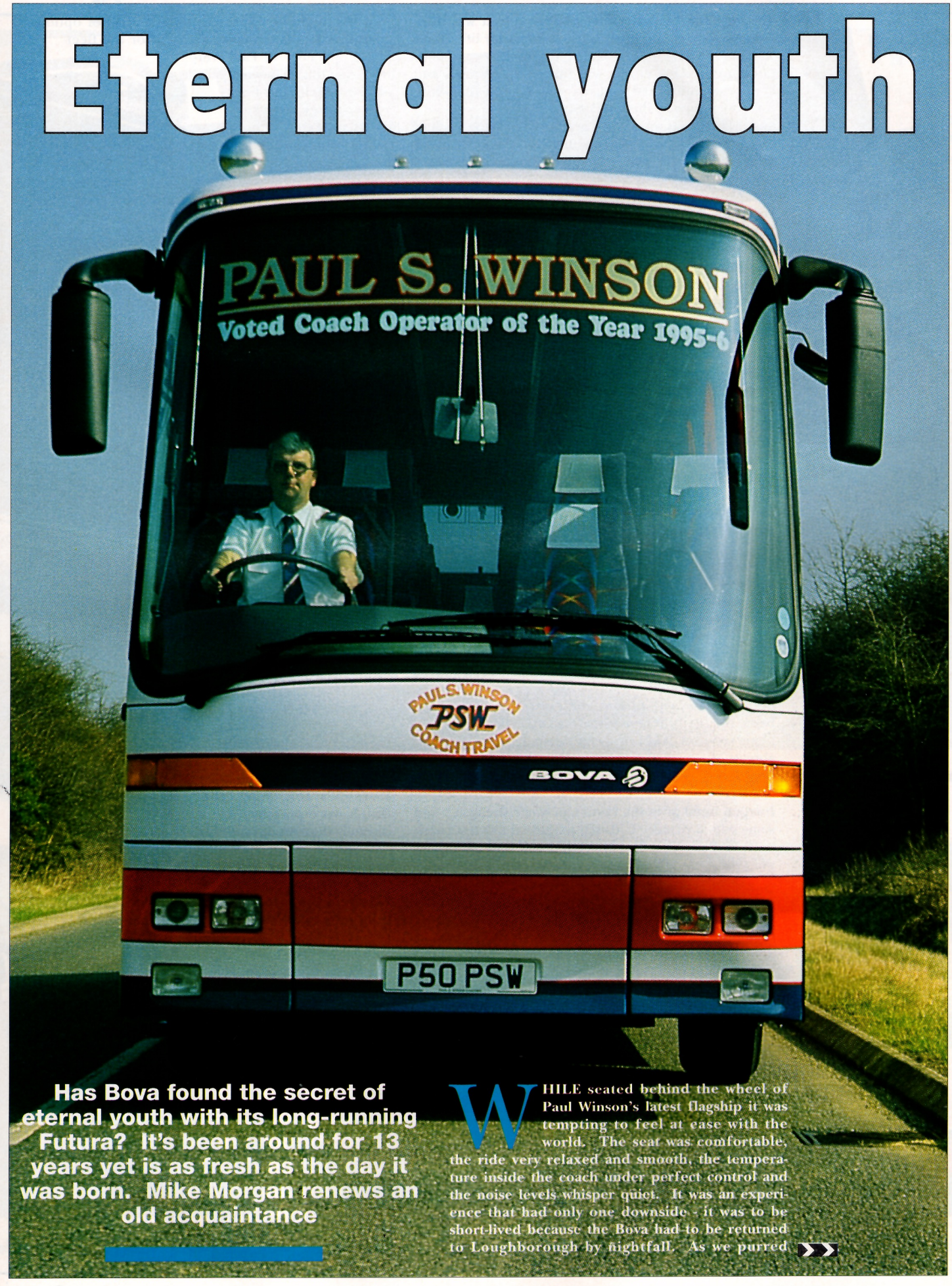
CBW

Eternal youth



Has Bova found the secret of eternal youth with its long-running Futura? It's been around for 13 years yet is as fresh as the day it was born. Mike Morgan renews an old acquaintance

WHILE seated behind the wheel of Paul Winson's latest flagship it was tempting to feel at ease with the world. The seat was comfortable, the ride very relaxed and smooth, the temperature inside the coach under perfect control and the noise levels whisper quiet. It was an experience that had only one downside - it was to be short-lived because the Bova had to be returned to Loughborough by nightfall. As we purred

through the Leicestershire countryside it was difficult to relate to the hurly burly of everyday life. Reps in their Vectras were rushing by but here we were cocooned. Our coach was fast and powerful but somehow unhurried and protected from the white heat of change in the late 1990s.

There was an urgent need to pinch the back of the hand unmercifully. Was this Bova Futura really a close descendent of a design first launched in a previous decade?

Not that it's been plain sailing for the Dutch company, which derives its name from the Bots (BO) family of Valkenswaard (VA). Since 1931 the company has concentrated on coaches. In 1969 it launched its first integral, leading to the Europa and introduction to the UK market, followed in the 1980s by the futuristic Futura - a design which took the coach world by storm.

In the late eighties the company joined the ill-fated United Bus consortium only to find that the expected synergies could not be sustained. It emerged from the traumas of that brave enterprise shaken and somewhat stirred.

While the UK remained one of its loyal markets through the Moseley distributorships, it had an additional sales outlet in the shape of importer and former-United Bus sister company, Optare. A twin-pronged approach was to open new opportunities until adverse currency changes gave Bova a price disadvantage at the start of 1995. A decline in UK sales was in prospect.

Towards the end of 1996 the import arrangements swung back in favour of Vin Moseley's Moseley (PCV) giving a clear division between sales of Cummins-engined Futuras through Optare Coach sales and DAF-engined machines through Moseley.

What is more, the manufacturer had unveiled a new corporate image, using a new trade mark based on a stylised B and a falcon to symbolise the history of its home town. Suddenly there was a new awareness of the Bova product, interior and exterior styling having been tweaked, dependence on DAF chassis components reduced, and European trends having been kept abreast of.

Build

Integral build gives the Futura an inner strength... and some added virtues. Unladen weight on this test coach is 12,460kg, which dips in around half a tonne lighter than some high-floor body-on-chassis combinations.

Underfloor locker space is an unrestricted 10.4 cubic metres. It's so big that you could contemplate using it to move house. And it combines with two rear lockers to give a voluminous 12 cubic metres. A guided tour of the underside exposes another bonus - independent front suspension.

To this full integral, anti-corrosion-treated, all-metal-framed structure, Bova adds:

- One-piece stretched galvanised steel panels
- Front, rear and wheelarch panels in GRP
- Locker doors in aluminium with individual locks
- Thermal insulation to roof and bodyside cavities, and acoustic insulation to the engine.

Extra-thick pillars immediately behind the plug door give witness to the roll-over bars for ECE R66.

The bonded, toughened double-glazed units have been upgraded for 1997 to double tinting on the side windows while the driver's window and entrance door remain single glazed.

Also new for this season are power-operated and heated exterior mirrors in coach colour, and a heated driver's window that opens or closes at the touch of a button.

As might be expected there is a list of options guaranteed to personalise a coach for the fleet-proud operator. In Paul Winson's case this included a pair of giant Alpine air-horns and orange marker lights repeated along the roof and lower skirt plus high-level brake lights.

Passenger impressions

Even without the benefit of the added distinctive features, it is doubtful if Paul S Winson clients can be unaware of the operator's attention to detail.

The red, white and blue livery is very precise in terms of colour and positioning. Mr Winson has a knack of instinctively spotting the smallest imperfection. Without so much as a spirit level or a colour chart he knows when it is spot-on. So when he visited the factory along with Vin Moseley's son, Karl, the Dutch were prepared for a carefully thought out spec list.

Pride, insistence on high standards, experience and common sense blend with the Bova style perfectly. Pride is reflected in the face of allocated driver Robert Yates. He, too, went on the factory visit because he will be living with the new coach for up to five years.

Moquette features strongly in the interior, using a cheerful grey-based rainbow criss-cross design. A Winson-specified moquette replaces the standard needle-cord on the side walls whereas the rainbow swirls adorn the roof centre panel and the underside of the racks - quaintly named hatracks by Bova. These racks are illuminated by orange lights on the inside of the brackets - another Winson touch.

Incidentally, the locker flaps have been lined with needle cord at Mr Winson's request.

Although most passengers will be blissfully unaware that this Bova has been personalised, they will certainly benefit when seated in the optional extra-wide Bova 10 seat. They cost a cool £210 extra per seat but add a caring touch that could make the difference between a journey that is tolerable and one that is a pleasure. They have simple, robust, fold-up arm rests, grab handles, and a fixed foot rest. Ash trays have been deleted. Topped by white Velcro-equipped headrest covers it's a sensible combi-

A powerful combination: coach, operator - and driver - in perfect harmony

onalised Futura: locker doors are lined with needlecord; high-level light at the rear; and extra-wide Bova 10 seats inside

nation of features which convinced Mr Winson that it was worth paying the premium over the standard Bova 8 seat.

Equipping a Bova with superior seating is sound thinking because it serves to amplify the already very smooth ride provided by the independent suspension.

Noise levels are low and the engine unobtrusive even when worked hard. Highest decibel readings were at the front where the footwell was the only noticeable source of uncontrolled sound. Nevertheless, the *CBW* meter refused to flicker above a commendable 70dB(A).

'Apart from the usual servicing we've had to spend nothing on it,' he said. 'Anti-roll bar bushes are the only things to have gone wrong. Tyre wear is fantastic. It's such a cost-effective vehicle'

Driver impressions

Bova's Futura has a very convincing wind-cheating profile, so low noise and good fuel consumption ought to be a consequence, yet its large wraparound windscreen has the effect of placing the driver in a 'goldfish bowl'.

Some find it disconcerting when perched at the controls like a forward-gunner in a Lancaster bomber and, when the sun shines, global warming takes on a whole new meaning.

Yet all-round visibility is excellent - particularly with the new generation of lop-eared mirrors. And the dreaded nearside blindspot is less of a hazard than on other highliners.

These factors help make the Futura pleasant to drive. It also boosts positive steering, powerful brakes, light pedal action, precise cable-linked gearchange and everything within reach in the compact cab area.

The Valkenswaard team has driven through a silent transformation to add further appeal. The steering wheel is now adjustable for height and rake. Nothing too radical - just enough to make all the difference, providing the driver with a more relaxed, less cramped driving position.

Otherwise, the asymmetrical dash layout remains familiar. Displayed before the driver is an apparently-random arrangement of dials that somehow makes perfect sense. If a designer started with a clean sheet of paper they might produce a more aesthetically pleasing and ergonomically logical arrangement - but it's doubtful if it could work more effectively.

Change for change sake is not the Bova way. However, it has taken far too long to provide fans for driver and courier as standard. This season's deliveries will have them, yet there weren't any on the Winson coach and, despite the lacklustre weather, they were missed.

Compensation came from the excellent Futurair integrated heating and ventilation system which puts control by degree at the driver's fingertips. The specification for this system is comprehensive and impressive. Suffice to say that it is powerful and effective, giving electronically-controlled independent front and rear temperature adjustment while a digital readout shows time, interior and exterior temperatures.

Verdict

Mr Winson's enthusiasm for the Futura is undisguised. Yet it's only the second time he has bought one - the last is a much-loved G-reg.

"Apart from the usual servicing we've had to spend nothing on it," he said. "Anti-roll bar bushes are the only things to have gone wrong. Tyre wear is fantastic. It's such a cost-effective vehicle."

While this experience may have helped to mould his buying decision, it means the test coach has to live up to a formidable reputation and our test suggested that the P-reg could do even better. Test fuel consumption was 13.72 mpg and ample torque available from the beefy DAF 329 bhp WS engine.

Riding the Futura is a pleasure no matter which seat you choose. Despite its humble 53-seat configuration (a demountable toilet is to be fitted), it has qualities which make it suitable for any classification of customer. It could not be defined as an executive but is able to fill that role without complaint.

There is no doubt that this is a class act, putting operator and machine in perfect harmony. CBW

SPECIFICATION

Vehicle:	Bova Futura
Body:	FHD 12-340 - 53 seats
Price:	£154,000 (basic spec)
Engine:	rear-mounted Euro 2 DAF WS 242 M six cylinder - turbocharged and aftercooled
Power:	329 bhp (242 kW) @ 2,000 rpm
Capacity:	11.63 litre
Torque:	996 Lbf ft (1350 Nm) @ 1,500 rpm
Gearbox:	ZF S6.85 synchromesh six-speed manual
Clutch:	single plate - hydraulic operation with air assistance
Steering:	ZF 8098 integral power-assisted - column adjustable for height and rake - 50 cm steering wheel
Brakes:	dual-circuit air system ABS fitted front - ZF discs rear - drums handbrake - spring release exhaust brake - air operated
Suspension:	front - full air, two bellows system with two Koni shock absorbers and two levelling valves rear - full air, four bellows system with four Koni shock absorbers and one levelling valve raise and lower
Front Axle:	ZF RL-85/E independent suspension
Rear axle:	ZF A131 - ratio 2.93:1
Tyres:	295/80R 22.5

Ample power from beefy 329 bhp DAF

DIMENSIONS

Length:	12 metres
Width:	2.5 metres
Height:	3.55 metres
Wheelbase:	6.09 metres
Unladen weight:	12,460 kg
GVW:	17,000 kg
Underfloor locker space:	12 cubic metres

PERFORMANCE

Test consumption:	13.77 mpg
Paul Winson in-service consumption:	12.75 mpg
Acceleration:	0-30 mph - 10 secs 0-50 mph - 26 secs
Fuel tank capacity:	160 gallons (maximum range - 2202 miles)
Noise levels at 62.5 mph:	front - 70 dB(A) middle - 67 dB(A) rear - 68 dB(A)

HIGH QUALITY LOW MILEAGE COACHES FROM OUR HIRE FLEET

1995 M EOS 90 49R, toilet, air conditioning
1995 M DAF SB3000 WS Van Hool Alizee 'H' 51R/Toilet
1995 M DAF SB3000 WS Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1995 M DAF SB3000 WS Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 55R
1994 L EOS 90 49R, toilet
1994 L DAF WS3000 Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/ Toilet
1994 L DAF KS3000 Easishift Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1994 L DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/ Toilet
1994 L DAF SB3000 Int Retarder, Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1994 L DAF HS2700 Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1994 L MB230LT Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/ Toilet
1993 K DAF KS3000 Auto Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1993 K DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/ Toilet
1993 K DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/ Toilet
1993 K DAF SB3000 Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1993 K DAF SM230LT Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R Toilet
1992 J DAF SB2305 Duple 340, 57R
1992 J DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R Toilet
1992 J DAF MB230LB Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/ Toilet

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1996 N DAF SB220 Auto, Northern Counties Paladin, 49 str bus
1995 M DAF SB220 Auto, Northern Counties Paladin, 49 str bus
1995 M DAF DB250 Auto, Northern Counties Palatine II, 77 str double deck bus
1995 M DENNIS DART Auto, 10M, Plaxton Pointer, 40 str bus
1992 J DAF SB220 Auto, Ikarus Citibus, 48 str bus

1992 J DAF MB230 LT Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/ Toilet
1991 H DAF SB2305 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R Toilet
1990 G MB230LB Van Hool Alizee 'SH', 53R/Toilet
1990 G MB230LB Van Hool Alizee 'H'
1990 G DAF SB3000 Van Hool 'H', 49/Toilet
1989 F DAF SB2305 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 53R
1989 F DAF SB2305 Van Hool Alizee 'DH' 51R/Toilet
1989 F DAF MB230LT Plaxton 3500, 51r/Toilet
1989 F DAF MB230LB Plaxton 3500 , 52R
1989 F DAF MB 230LB Plaxton, 51R/Toilet
1988 E DAF SB2300 Van Hool Alizee, 51R/Toilet
1988 E DAF SB2300 Duple 340SL, 53R
1988 E DAF MB230LT Plaxton 3500, 51R/Toilet
1988 E DAF MB230LB Plaxton 3500, 53R

HIGH QUALITY USED COACHES

1995 M MERCEDES 709, Autobus Classique, 25 str, bus seats
1993 K MAN, Jonckheere Deauville, 51R/Toilet
1993 K DAF SB2700 HS, Caetano Algarve, 53R
1991 (H) DAF SB2305 Plaxton 3200 LD 55R
1990 G VOLVO B10M Plaxton 3500, 49R/Toilet
1990 G DAF DHTD Duple 320, 57R
1990 (G) SB3000 VAN HOOL ALIZEE DH,51R/toilet, air con
1991 (H) DAF SB2305 Plaxton 3200 LD 55R
1989 G SCANIA K113 Van Hool Alizee 'SH', 49R/ Toilet
1989 F DAF MB230 Van Hool Alizee 'SH', 53R/ Toilet
1989 (F) SB3000 VAN HOOL ALIZEE DH, 51R/toilet, air con
1989 (F) VOLVO B10M Van Hool Alizee H, 53R
1989 PP BOVA FUTURA FHD, 49R/Toilet
1989 SB3000 Plaxton 3500, 51/Toilet
1988 VOLVO B10M, Plaxton 3500, 49R/Toilet
1988 PP BOVA FUTURA FHD, 49R/Toilet
1988 E DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R Toilet
1988 E SB3000 Van Hool Alizee SH 49R/Toilet
1987 E DAF SB2300 Plaxton 3500, 53R, air conditioned
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AUTOBUS

There's no slacking

Among first operators in UK to put one of new Merc Varios on the road

by Mike Morgan

MATLOCK-based KV & GL Slack Limited is among the first operators in the UK to put one of the new Mercedes-Benz Vario midibuses on the road.

Vario was first seen at last year's Coach & Bus show when it was displayed on the Autobus stand as the Rotherham-based company made headlines in the wake of its takeover by Optare.

Autobus had adapted its award-winning Nouvelle body to fit the 0814D Vario chassis/cowl but the changeover period from the previous 814D model ensured that the new model's introduction into UK fleets has only just commenced.

The last Autobus-bodied 814D has now left the factory and the Slacks vehicle kicks off delivery of 16 orders won under Optare ownership, putting the business on the road to building and selling more than 100 vehicles for the first time in its history - a 25 per cent increase on its previous best.

"The Nouvelle/0814D represents an excellent combination and is already proving very popular with British operators looking for the in-built reliability and durability of the Mercedes chassis with the high quality, high-profile Nouvelle body," said Alan White, Autobus sales and marketing director.

The Nouvelle Mercedes-Benz 0814D Vario delivered to Slacks of Matlock has 29 fixed Algarve seats fitted with lap and diagonal seatbelts, courier seat, forced-air ventilation and reading lights, curtains, Blaupunkt stereo PA, large boot and side locker.

■ Look out for *CBW*'s exclusive road test on the Nouvelle/Vario in a future issue.

MOSELEY IN SCOTLAND

Browns of Edinburgh buys first new coach

AFTER 15 years in coaching, Browns of Edinburgh has invested in its first new coach and completed a full set of half a dozen Volvo/Van Hool coaches going back to 1984.

With Coach of the Year stickers added to the silver show livery, the new coach was bought by Browns following its display at the NEC coach show in 1996. It joins the Newbridge-based fleet on mainly incoming tours for Japanese visitors plus a variety of other work.

Not only was a Van Hool-bodied Volvo B10M a winning combination in the recent *Coach and Bus Week* Coach Industry Awards but it's a winning combination for Browns founder Alastair Brown.

He has also bought a 13-year-old example of the same combination which has been repainted and retrimmed by Moseley's, the same dealership that supplied the new coach.

However, the show livery on the P-reg has been retained as an alternative to Browns' current silver/ maroon/red design.

Mr Brown said he bad been considering a new livery to differentiate his company from others who had adopted similar schemes.

at Slacks...

OPTARE

MetroRiders cross the Mersey

BIRKENHEAD-based independent A1A Travel has upgraded its Liverpool city centre secured services with the delivery of two long-wheelbase Optare MetroRiders, giving it a total capacity for 41 passengers.

The buses replace two Mercedes-Benz 609D minibuses, which have operated the 107/207 Penny Lane circulars, to provide more capacity. The company has held the contract for the services, which serve Paradise Street bus station from Monday to Saturday, for the last three years and has two more years to run it.

Built to Merseytravel's tendered services specifications, the MetroRiders work from 7am to 7pm in Liverpool, and then cross the water to provide evening operations on the 151 & 293 routes from Woodside bus station to Port Sunlight and West Kirkby.

Deals In Brief

Ah, Robinsons

HOLIDAY tour specialist Robinsons of Great Harwood continues with its bold new livery on another batch of **Plaxton** Premiere 350-bodied Volvo B10Ms for the 1997 season, having dropped the traditional green, black and white.

Mystery journey

DESTINATION displays can sometimes be misleading - particularly when the vehicle in question is being completed at the bodybuilder's for Stagecoach. It is common for all Stagecoach buses to leave the factory apparently destined for somewhere in Hampshire but the electronic display on this ALX Volvo B6LE will be reprogrammed with somewhere more appropriate when it joins Stagecoach Manchester. However, being one of 90 similar vehicles being built by Alexander for Stagecoach, it could go to any of the group's subsidiaries.

Classic quartet

CLASSIC Coaches Continental, the County Durham operator based at Annfield Plain, is taking four **Plaxton** Premiere 350-bodied Volvo B10Ms for its fleet for the start of the 1997 season. Seen at Plaxton's Eastfield factory, one of the batch is fresh from the paint shop. Its bold red livery with deep red stripes angled towards the rear is waiting for application of fleet names. CBW

Guided tour: Surrey's Alan Teer and Peter Gent

Securon seatbelts: council convinced

SECURON'S new automatic locking, retracting belt attracted the interest of Surrey County Council during a visit from its public transport officer Alan Teer.

The Amersham-based manufacturer provided such a convincing case for the belt that the council is now recommending it because, it says, it encourages higher rate of use.

Guide during the visit was Securon quality director Peter Gent.

Securon is offering free visits to the factory for all councils.

Contact Peter Gent on 01494 434455, fax 01494 726499.

Tracking system 'you can afford'

by Mark Williams

'TARDIS' uses US defence satellites to keep tabs on vehicles to within 30 metres

MANUFACTURERS of a vehicle tracking and data system say it jumps the cost barrier which has held back many operators from investing.

TARDIS (Tracking And Real-time Data Information System) uses the US defence satellite system, GPS, and radio networking to keep tabs on vehicles to within 30 metres of their real position.

The base station is equipped with nothing more complex than a PC, which, via a RAM radio modem, can exchange paging messages with the TARDIS-equipped vehicle. With extra software and agreements, the system can be used through much of Western Europe.

The system relies upon a 'black box' hidden in the coach or bus, linked with an antenna to transmit and receive its messages. The system can be set up to report vehicle position in pre-set intervals, or pre-set distances. It can be set to sound an alarm if the vehicle leaves a pre-determined route, or set off an alarm at base if the vehicle is moved or towed away.

Because the base station can communicate with the vehicle, it can also activate an immobiliser. Messages up to 240 characters long can be sent and received, or more complex messages sent with additional equipment.

Manufacturers Midas Data Communications Ltd says savings come in many forms, including reduced or eliminated cellular phone calls, better manpower utilisation, and the ability to convey new pick-up points to the driver while en route. The system can also be used to provide customers with accurate news of any delay in real time.

Details from Michael Keppel, on 01276 62574, fax 01276 670170.

Cordless drill range

MAKITA has launched a range of cordless drills/drivers with a motor life of more than 500 hours' continuous use.

The Makita Marathon 6313DWA-EX is a 2Ah drill with 13 mm keyless chuck, variable torque, two-speed gearbox, variable speed trigger and an extra battery.

Details from Makita on 01908 211673, or 0800 454746.

Burnout snag licked

PRESSURE washers have a fatal flaw. They overheat and self-destruct within minutes of running dry.

Ilkeston-based Checo claims it has the burn-out problem licked with Proshot, a washer which has already run for 32 hours on bypass and three hours continuous on dry. Many other washers would by this time have suffered seals burning out and pistons overheating and cracking.

Proshot has an integral plastic detergent tank, and can be stored upright to save space. It generates 2,300 psi and its components meet BSI standards.

Checo's Chas Raggio or Philip Lund can be reached on 0115 930 7217, fax 0115 930 7493.

Board 'reduces noise'

A NEW plywood board claimed to reduce noise levels is being examined for use in coach and bus manufacture.

Coustiboard 63 uses a laminate layer of cork elastomer to deaden noise but is otherwise similar to using conventional plywood. Manufacturer, The Noise Control Centre, says it would be especially useful for floor and bulkhead construction and has already been used for bus seatboxes.

"The superior performance of Coustiboard often negates the need for further acoustic treatment, such as acoustic foams of fibres, so reduces material cost and labour in some areas," said a spokesman for the Melton Mowbray company.

The Noise Control Centre is on 01664 821810, fax 01664 821820.

Deter theft: 'Counter Cache' now improved

Better banknote safe

VOLUMATIC has added a radial pin lock for its Counter Cache banknote safe, which could be suitable, for example, in booking offices. The simple device improves security and staff safety by reducing the till cash float, and the radial pin lock will help deter attempted break-ins, says Volumatic.

Volumatic is on 01203 684217, fax 01203 638155.

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1993 12 metre, 36 Amviente seats, air conditioning, rear floor level toilet and kitchen servery inc. tea, coffee and fridge, Flotex carpet throughout.

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1992 SCANIA K113 PLAXTON PREMIERE 3200. Seven speed comfort shift gearbox, Telma, ABS, 53 recliners & courier, radio/PA, blinds to windows, centre carpet, wheel discs, MoT Nov '97.....**£89,750.00**

1989 SETRA S215 HD 49 Str + Courier. All usual Kassbohrer refinements. £2,500 factory overhaul in Aug. 96. Seats remoquetted in modern graffiti style. MoT Nov '97.....**£79,500.00**

1988 DUPLE 425 CUMMINS L.10 53 + Courier. Toilet, TV/video, drinks machine, curtains, P.P. seat belts, Telma, new clutch & radiator, MoT Jan '98.....**£37,500 + VAT**

All vehicles have unmarked bodywork, are far above average condition for their year. Full inspection facilities are available and any faults will be rectified. Volvo B.58 considered in P.X.
69495/CM **01494 441976 - Office**
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35 retrimmed seats, power door, dome, taxed 7/97, tested 29/5/97, £3,500 spent in last 5 months mechanically, red/cream
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1 1986 LEYLAND TIGER PLAXTON 3200 COACH. White, 53 reclining seats, arm/foot rests, courier seat, radio/pa system.....£24,000 plus VAT
1 1986 LEYLAND TIGER PLAXTON 3500 COACH. White, 49 reclining seats, arm/foot rests, courier seat, continental door, toilet, radio/pa system, water boiler .....£24,000 plus VAT
2 1984 LEYLAND TIGER PLAXTON 3200 COACHES. White, 51 fixed seats with seat belts, arm/foot rests, radio/pa system.....£19,000 each plus VAT
2 1983 LEYLAND TIGER PLAXTON 3200 COACHES. White, 51 fixed seats with seat belts, arm/foot rests, radio/pa system.....£18,000 each plus VAT
1 1981 LEYLAND LEOPARD PLAXTON SUPREME COACH. White, 53 seats, foot rests, pa system...£8,000 plus VAT
1 1979 LEYLAND LEOPARD PLAXTON SUPREME COACH. White, 53 seats, pa system.....£4,500 plus VAT
3 1987 IVECO 49-10 (ROBIN HOOD BODIED) midi-buses, red, 23 seat, 6 standing, luggage rack .....£5,000 each plus VAT

All vehicles taxed and MoT'd PLEASE CONTACT CHRIS SQUIBB, ENGINEERING MANAGER ON 01983 522456 Ext. 239
69369/CM

1989 (F) LEYLAND TIGER Paramount 3500, 53 reclinders + crew, Cummins engine, ZF auto gearbox radio/PA, choice of 2 . . . . . **£50,000**

1992 (J) TOYOTA OPTIMO II, 21 seater, radio/PA, blue/gold. . . **£20,000**

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Please call Steve Perks for further details on 01293 507099
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1982 Leopard 51 Seater Duple
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1990 (G) PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 VOLVO B10M. 53 seats + courier seat, MoT till Jan '98 . . . . . **£73,500 + VAT**

1990 (G) VAN HOOL ALIZEE DAF SB2300. 51 seats. Centre sunken toilet, TV/video, Sutrak air con. MoT till March '98. . . . . **£79,500 + VAT**

1990 (H) CAETANO ALGARVE VOLVO B10M. 53 seats + courier seat, Sutrak air con. MoT till Sept '97. . . . . **£76,700 + VAT**
69492/CM **Tel: 0181 808 2000/6446**

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43 recliners and courier, PA and video, fridge, drinks, W/C and air conditioning.
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Mercedes 811D,
27 high back seats, new MoT, good vehicle.
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49 recliners, saloon wc, Paramount front and rear, clean vehicle
Sensible offers on both
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53 seats with seatbelts, re-moquetted interior, 12 months MoT
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Paul Kettlewell
01777 860360
69421/CM

1981 Volvo B58 Duple Dominant II Bristol Dome, 53 seats and belts, curtains, air door, radio cassette, 11 months test and taxed **£10,500**

1980 Bedford Duple Dominant II, 53 seats, radio cassette, tested, taxed **£2,750**

1979 Bedford Plaxton, 45 seats, curtains, air door, radio cassette, 5 months test, taxed **£3,500**

1976 Leyland Leopard Dominant, semi auto, 53 seats and belts, air door, radio cassette, 7 months test, taxed **£3,500**

1976 Leyland National S10, 45 seats, recon engine, 12 months test, taxed **£2,750**

1988 Freight Rover Aitken Body, 20 seats, destination gear, 6 months test, taxed **£2,950**

Tel: 01279 430339
Mobile: 0831 350 686
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1988 LEYLAND TIGER, 54 bus seats, Plaxton Derwent body, MoT Sept '97 . . . . . **£25,500**
1983 LEYLAND TIGER, 51 seats, Plaxton 3200, MoT Jan '98. . **£11,000**
1983 LEYLAND TIGER, 51 seats, Plaxton 3200, MoT Feb '98. . **£11,000**
1987 METRO RIDER, 25 seats, MCW body, no MoT **£3,000**

All the above vehicles are subject to VAT
TELEPHONE: (01443) 682671
69486/CM

1989 Bova Futura, 51/55 seats, double glazed, video, toilet, MoT Aug 97, MoT Sept 97, choice of 2 .....**£67,500 each + VAT**

1985 Bova Futura, 49 seats, double glazed, video, toilet, MoT Jan 98 .....**£35,000 + VAT**

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01525 240630
69456/CM

Tel: 01733 467147 CBW Coach and Bus Week Fax: 01733 467154

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DAF

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These vehicles have unmarked bodywork and are well above average condition for their year. Full inspection facilties are available and any faults found will be rectified. Volvo B.58 considered in part ex.

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1968 BRISTOL VRT LL, open top double decker, 78 seats, Gardner Engine. Recon gearbox 94, recon mitre box/fluid flywheel 96, tachograph, very good condition throughout, MoT March 98. £4,950 + VAT ono. **Tel: 01469 560550.** 69447/DD

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1 x 1984 (March) Leyland Tiger with Plaxton 3200 Express body, 53 seats, semi-automatic.

1 x 1985 Leyland Tiger, Duple Caribbean II, 53 seats, ZF 6-speed.

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1989 F Freight Rover Carlyle Mark II 20-seat bus
1984 B Mercedes 608D Whittaker 19-seat luxury conversion with large dropwell boot, racks and skirts
1981 X Leyland Cub CU435/Duple Dominant 31/33 seat bus, Allison auto

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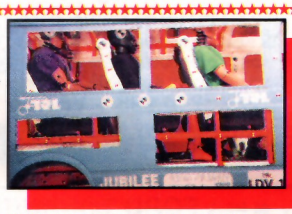

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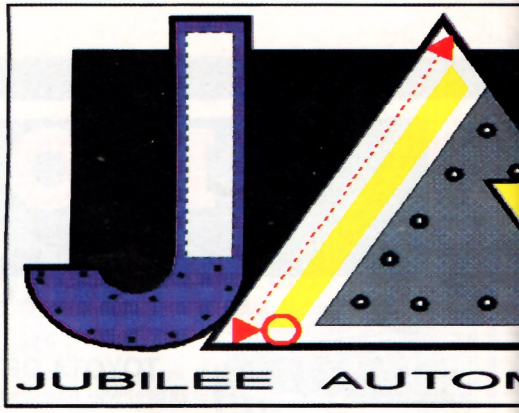

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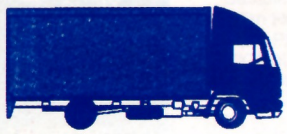

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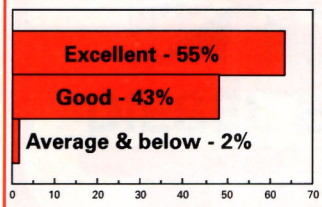

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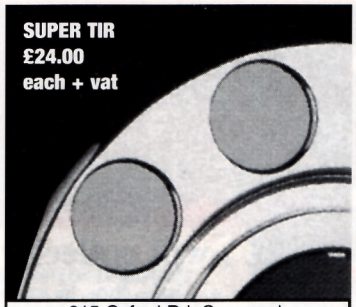

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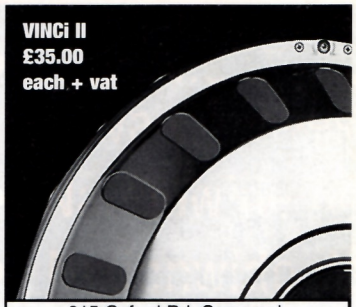

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In a recent survey inserted in Coach & Bus Week, readers were asked about the usefulness of the classified section.

Here are our findings!

- The average reader spends up to 15 minutes reading the CBW classified.
- **More** people read **more** of CBW.

Read all the magazine:
42% CBW against 27% BCB

Read most of magazine:
52% CBW against 31% BCB

AUCTIONS

By direction of a leading North West Operator and due to Fleet Reduction **HIGHAMS** are favoured with instructions to sell (subject to conditions of sale) by

AUCTION

11 am prompt, Thursday, 17th April, 1997
On site from Rothesay Garage, Broadway, Dukinfield, Cheshire SK16 4UU

15 BUSES INC DART/SLF/DAF/MCW
9 COACHES INC VOLVO/DAF/LEYLAND
1 COMPLETE RECOVERY VEHICLE
1 COMMERCIAL VEHICLE ROLLING ROAD BRAKE TESTER
1 SERVICE VAN
15 WAYFARER MARK II TICKET MACHINES
Various tools and equipment to maintain the above fleet
Spares for buses and coaches
Assorted Office Furniture

Viewing: Wednesday Prior 12 noon to 6.00 pm and from 9.00 am Sale Day
Catalogues available on site from View day
Further Particulars available from: L W Davidson ASVA at HIGHAMS, Waterloo Road, Stalybridge, Cheshire.
Tel: 0161 338 8698

69606/AUC

Appointments & Tenders

Tel: 01733 467144 Fax: 01733 467154

Customer Support - York

Distinctive Systems is the UK's leading supplier of computerised booking systems for coach and coach operators. Established for 15 years, we have well over 500 clients, including most of the leading names within the industry.

We are located in superb purpose built offices in the heart of the new Clifton Moor commercial development on York's A1237 ring road, with easy access from Leeds, Wetherby, Harrogate and Selby.

We wish to recruit an additonal member of staff to strengthen our customer support team. The ideal applicant will be in his or her mid to late twenties and will have several years experience in coaching administration. Whilst experience in one or more of our software packages would be an advantage, a high level of computer literacy in desktop systems in general, and Microsoft Windows in particular, are more important requirements. A formal computing qualification would be especially advantageous.

Applicants should have the ability to work well as part of a small highly focused team, but must above all be intuitive problem solvers.

The position will be mainly office based, but there will be an occasional requirement for site visits, which could be anywhere in the UK.

For the right person we are offering a generous remuneration package including a non-contributory pension scheme and private health care. Help will be given with relocation expenses where appropriate.

69476/APP

Please write enclosing your CV to:

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Customer Support Manager
Distinctive Systems Ltd
Amy Johnson Way
York
YO3 4XT

Fax: 01904 690810

E-mail: admin@distinctive.co.uk

DISTINCTIVE systems

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

In accordance with EC Directive 92/50/EEC (open procedure) suitably experienced contractors are invited to tender for the provision of the service below.

1.	**Contracting Authority**	Bristol City Council, Contract Services, Sandy Park Road, Brislington, Bristol, BS4 3NZ. Phone: (0117) 971 3341, Fax: (0117) 971 2046.
2.	**Category of Service**	Category 2, transportation of passengers to and from educational and social services establishments CPV refs 60212100, 60212200; CPC refs 71211, 71212; CPA refs 60.21.21, 60.21.22.
3.	**Place of Delivery**	Primarily within the boundary of Bristol City Council.
4.	**Reserved to a particular profession**	No.
5.	**Division of tenders**	Tenders may be submitted for some or all of the passenger transport routes.
6.	**Variants**	Variants will not be accepted.
7.	**Duration of Contract**	36 months from 01/09/1997 to 31/08/2000.
8.	**Documents from**	As in 1.
	Requests not later than	01/05/1997.
	Fee	None.
9.	**Opening of tenders**	Only officers and members of the awarding authority admitted.
	Date, time and place	12/05/1997 as in 1.
10.	**Deposits and guarantees**	None.
11.	**Financing and payment**	Payments will be made against invoices submitted monthly to the awarding authority. The invoices will be based upon the value of the work done in the preceding month.
12.	**Legal form of group bidders**	Joint and several liability by all service providers.
13.	**Qualifications**	As set out in Articles 29-35 on Directive 92/50/EEC. The contract documents will set out in detail the authority's requirements.
14.	**Tenders may lapse after**	2 months 12/05/1997-12/07/1997.
15.	**Award criteria**	Economically most advantageous tender.
16.	**Other information**	Transport operators must ensure that all vehicles are licensed in accordance with the Public Passenger Vehicles Act 1981, and comply at all times with the Public Service Vehicle Regulations. All vehicles with 8 or less passenger seats must be licensed as hackney carriage or private hire vehicles, or otherwise authorized for use by Bristol City Council.
17.	**Notice postmarked**	27/03/1997.

69430/TEN

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Viewing Friday, 11th April.

The sale to take place at

Reynolds Coaches, Ormesby Road, Caister-on-Sea, Gt Yarmouth, Norfolk.

All enquiries to: E. Anglian Motor Auctions, The Auction Centre, 261 Aylsham Road, Norwich NR3 2RE. Tel: 01603 409824

69358/APP

MANAGER

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If this describes you then send your CV and photo stating salary required to: **Tony Hill, Impact Coaches, Bridge Garage, Culmington Road, EALING, LONDON W13 9NB.**

69181/APP

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▼ Coach

Hyslop joins Skills

Former Stagecoach chief now operations manager

by Mike Morgan

SKILLS Motor Coaches has appointed former-Stagecoach Kingston-upon-Hull divisional manager **Stuart Hyslop** as its operations manager based at Radcliffe, Nottingham.

Mr Hyslop will oversee all allocations of full and part-time drivers together with the fleet of over 50 coaches operating across all the areas of business: Continental and UK holidays and short breaks, group travel, excursions, coastal services, and private hire.

Before moving to Hull he was managing director of Chesterfield Transport before it was taken over by Stagecoach. Prior to that he was md of Darlington Transport.

Stuart Hyslop: will oversee 50-coach fleet

Although Chesterfield and Darlington were both predominantly bus operations, they each had their own coaching arms and each bought out local coach companies. KHCT recently sold its Kingstonian coach operation to East Yorkshire (*CBW*, 22 March).

Nigel Skill, managing director of family-owned Skills, said: "We are delighted that Stuart has accepted this post. We see him playing an important role in the expansion of our business by consolidating on the continuing growth of the coach holiday market in particular." CBW

▼ Bus

Strathclyde's new engineering head

GRAHAM Russell joins Strathclyde Buses this week to take charge of all aspects of the First-bus subsidiary's engineering policy.

He moves from Lothian Region Transport in Edinburgh but was previously an employee of Volvo Bus and Tyne and Wear PTE.

John McCormick, Strathclyde Buses managing director, said: "Graham is already well-known within the Scottish bus industry and will bring a wealth of engineering knowledge and background to Strathclyde Buses."

Meanwhile, two other top staff are on the move within Strathclyde Buses.

Operations director, John Elliott, who has 32 years of experience within the bus industry, has been appointed director and general manager. He will oversee the company's seven bus depots throughout Glasgow and Lanarkshire.

Eric Stewart, who was previously in charge of purchasing and systems, has become commercial director. He will be in charge of planning, ticket and agent sales and retain responsibility for purchasing.

CBW Coach and Bus Week
The PSV industry's news weekly

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PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.
YOUR COMPANY DETAILS

1. What is your primary job title? (Tick one only)

Owner/Director ❒01
Senior/General Manager ❒02
Engineering/Service Manager ❒03
Other (please specify) ❒04

2. What is your company's main business function?

Bus Operator ❒01
Coach Operator ❒05
Coach & Bus Operator ❒02
Local Government ❒03
Other (please specify) ❒04

3. How many vehicles does your company own/operate? (Tick all that apply)

	Buses	Coaches
1-5	❒01	❒10
6-10	❒02	❒11
11-15	❒03	❒12
16-25	❒04	❒13
26-39	❒05	❒14
40-100	❒06	❒15
101-400	❒07	❒16
401-1000	❒08	❒17
1000+	❒09	❒18

4. Do you have responsibility for the recommendation/ purchase and/or specification of the following? (Tick all that apply)

	Pur	Spec	Rec
Vehicles	❒01	❒12	❒23
Parts/Spares	❒02	❒13	❒24
Oil/Fuel	❒03	❒14	❒25
Breakdown	❒04	❒15	❒26
Insurance/Finance	❒05	❒16	❒27
Fuel Cards	❒06	❒17	❒28
Training	❒07	❒18	❒29
Venue/Attraction Tickets	❒08	❒19	❒30
Ferry Crossing	❒09	❒20	❒31
Hotel Bookings	❒10	❒21	❒32
Theatre Tickets	❒11	❒22	❒33
Other (please specify)			❒34

5. What type of work does your company undertake? (Tick all that apply)

Private Hire ❒01
Day Excursions ❒02
British Tours ❒03
European Tours ❒04
Local Government Contracts ❒05
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